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Remarks to the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America in Las Vegas, Nevada
August 12, 2004

The President. Thank you all. Thank you all very much. Thank you all very much for coming. Thanks for the warm welcome. It's good to be back here in Nevada.

Audience member. We love you!

The President. Thank you. I want to thank Doug and the good folks here in this training facility for welcoming us. I appreciate your smart work and your hard work and your dedication to helping our fellow citizens gain the skills necessary to be able to find work.

And I just want to talk a little bit about the importance of education, but the reason I'm so grateful that the Carpenters have been so hospitable here is that this is an example of what works. That's what we're interested in in life; we're interested in finding things that work and heralding them. And I want to thank Doug for your leadership.

I'm not the only Bush who's recently been in Las Vegas. You might remember my wife was back here recently. She went on the Leno show the next night. [*Laughter*] She said something along the lines, what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas. [*Laughter*] I was interested in hearing her say that. [*Laughter*]

She's doing great, by the way. I was a lucky fellow when she said yes. And she's a wonderful First Lady and great mom. I'm going to meet up with her here in a little bit to continue our journey throughout the West.

Really what I'm doing is traveling around, letting the people know that I'm interested in earning your vote. I really believe that a person running for office—I'm also interested in letting people know I've got more to do to make this country a better place, a stronger place, and a safer place. And I appreciate the chance to come and talk about my vision for the future of this country here.

I want to thank Doug, and I also want to thank his brother Mike. I'm not sure which one of them is prettier. [*Laughter*] But they're both smart, and they're both good Americans.

I want to thank Dale Shoemaker for his leadership here. I want to thank Doug Banes and Andy Silins, Bill Irwin. These are all folks who make this facility work well—appreciate your hospitality. It's great to meet the workers from all around our country.

I went to the facility next door where Doug and his folks are training people how to work on these big GE engines, and there's people from Fort Smith, Arkansas, and southern Indiana, and a fellow from McAllen, Texas. People from all around the country are here to gain the skills necessary to be able to work and put food on the table. And again, that's why I'm here. This is a program that works.

I want to thank my friend the Governor, Kenny Guinn, for coming out to say hello. I appreciate him being here. Congressman Jon Porter—he's a good fellow, a really good fellow, and I appreciate him coming out. Congressman Jim Gibbons—he's from northern Nevada.

I know we got members of the Nevada National Guard, First Squadron, 221st Calvary. I appreciate you being here. Thanks for your service.

I told you one of the things I'm working on is to make the country a better country. See, I know the strength of the country is the hearts and souls of the citizens. Right here in Nevada, you've got a lot of loving citizens who are willing to help neighbors in need.

When I landed today, I met a fellow named Mike Peschl. Where are you, Mike?

There he is. Thank you for coming, Mike. Here's what Mike does. Mike has now worked on his 34th home for Habitat for Humanity. It is a—he spends every Saturday at a Habitat building site. What he is doing is helping to transform America one heart and one soul at a time. He knows what I know, that there's nothing better at a Habitat site to work with the eventual homeowner. And that accomplishes two things. One, it shows somebody, somebody cares about them. That's what Mike works—Mike is loving a neighbor like he'd like to be loved himself. You know what else it does? It encourages an ownership society in America. We want more people owning things. We want more people owning their own home in this country.

We'll continue rallying the armies of compassion all across the country. See, I understand Government can hand out money, but it cannot put hope in a person's heart or sense of purpose in a person's life. That's done when people have heard a call and are willing to put an arm around somebody who is lonely or hurts or is addicted and says, "I love you, brother or sister. What can I do to help you?" America will change. America will change one soul at a time.

The stronger America is an America where people can find work. And I was obviously concerned about our country after a recession. That means people weren't working. It means we were going backwards.

Of course, we started to recover from that recession, and then we got attacked, and that hurt our economy. Make no mistake about it, the attacks of September the 11th hurt. We had some corporate scandals. That hurt. And we've got people who don't tell the truth, it begins to shake the confidence of our economy. We dealt with these situations. I'm going to talk a little bit about the war later on, but we passed laws that say to our corporate citizens, "You will be held to account if you do not tell the truth to your shareholders and your employees."

We've overcome the obstacles. You know why? We've got great workers. We've got productive, hard-working people in America. We've overcome these obstacles because the entrepreneurial spirit is strong, the small-business sector of our economy is alive and well. We have overcome these obstacles because our farmers and ranchers are good. We've overcome these obstacles because we refuse to be intimidated. The spirit of America is strong, and our economy is strong as well.

I also believe one of the reasons that we have overcome these obstacles is because we provided well-timed tax relief to the small businesses and the workers of America. If a construction worker has got more money in his pocket, he's going to demand an additional good or a service. And when they demand that additional good or a service, somebody has to produce the good or a service. And when somebody produces a good or a service, somebody is more likely to keep a job or find work. That's how the economy works. That's why the tax relief was important.

We also helped people with families. If you're working and you've got a child, we helped you raise that child by raising the child credit. If you're married, we helped you with the marriage penalty. Let me—it's a backward Tax Code, isn't it, when you penalize marriage? We ought to be encouraging marriage in our country.

We helped our small businesses—listen, this economy is strong, it's getting stronger, there's still work to be done. I mean, think about it, the unemployment rate in this State is at 4.2 percent. People are working in Nevada. People can make a living in this State. National unemployment rate is at 5.5 percent. We're the strongest economy in the world amongst industrialized nations.

But there's more to do. In order to keep jobs here at home, we need an energy policy in America to make us less dependent

on foreign sources of energy. In order to keep jobs at home, we ought to be confident about our ability to compete in the world.

There's some economic isolationists that want to wall us off. I think that's a mistake. Listen, we've opened up our markets. It's good for American consumers when there's more products coming in for people to choose from. That's how you get better quality at better price. What I'm asking is for other countries to treat us the way we treat them, because we can compete with anybody, anyplace, anywhere in the world.

In order to make sure jobs stay here, we got to have health care policies that make it more affordable for people to have health insurance. Most small businesses have trouble affording health insurance. Large businesses are fine. It's the small-business sector that is having trouble providing health insurance for our fellow citizens. And therefore, I think small businesses ought to be allowed to pool risk across jurisdictional boundaries so they can get the same discounts for health insurance that big companies get.

Listen, we're going to use technology to help change health care to make it more efficient, to cut down on mistakes, and to help control costs. I mean, the health care industry needs to become modernized. It needs to welcome technology so that it can be a more efficient deliverer of services. We've got to make sure that the patient and doctor are central to the decision-making processes in health care, not Federal bureaucrats. That's why I'm for health savings accounts, which are important.

We'll make sure the Medicare modernization bill I signed works, gives seniors choices and prescription drug coverage. We'll continue to provide community health centers for the poorest of our citizens. And to make sure that health care is available and affordable, we need medical liability reform. You know what I'm talking about in Nevada when it comes to medical liability reform. [*Laughter*] You've seen the costs of frivolous lawsuits. Ask your small-business neighbor what it's like to try to provide health care when the costs are going up because of these frivolous lawsuits. Ask your neighbors what it's like when there's a threat of lawsuit. That's why we need tort reform as well. These are practical ways to make sure this economy grows.

And finally, to make sure this economy grows and continues to grow, we need to be wise about how we spend your money in Washington and keep your taxes low. Just be careful—all I ask you is be careful about all this talk about taxing the rich. You know how that goes. The so-called rich hire accountants and lawyers to maybe not pay as much and, therefore, in order to meet all these promises, guess who gets to end up stuck with the bill?

Audience member. We do.

The President. The working people. Be careful of this language. We've heard it before in American politics.

Now, one of the reasons I'm here is because I understand the importance of education when it comes to making sure our workers are able to find jobs. Doug's outfit has been really innovative. In other words, what he says is, is that, "We got the skilled workers. We got hard-working people, and now we want to match their desire to work and their skills with the jobs which actually exist." That's why we went and saw the—these big turbine-driven engines. People are looking for workers, people who know these engines. And so that's what the apprenticeship program was all about and the skill training programs are all about. It's the practical use of people's time so that people can do what they want to do, which is work. And my attitude is, is that we ought to listen carefully to the strategy employed by this union and implement it at places like our community colleges as well.

See, there are a lot of people who want to work but the jobs, the nature of the jobs are changing. These jobs are changing. And therefore, they need help. They need

a little extra education to be able to fill the new jobs. I think, for example, of meeting with textile workers. Their jobs left, but there's enough Government money to pay for the reeducation. And now they're in the health care field, and they're making more money in the new job after getting some additional education.

That's what Doug understands, a little added value. If you help somebody with some extra training, they become more productive. And more productive workers makes more money. And so the Federal Government ought to be wise about how we use taxpayers' money, and that includes providing training at community colleges for people who want to work and need new skills to fill the jobs of the 21st century.

So I've laid out a plan to double the number of workers that get reeducated, find additional skills so they can make more money. They've got to have innovative training accounts. They need less bureaucracy. If you look at the workforce training programs in the Government, if you put an objective look on them, you'll find that a lot of money goes to bureaucracy and not enough goes to the workers. And that's what we want to focus on. We want to focus on the people who we're trying to help. We want to make sure that—I believe we ought to increase our budgets for these training programs, and we'll continue to call upon Congress to do so, because it's money well-spent. See, I think the role of Government is to help people help themselves. And one way to do so is through good valid education programs, just like they do here at this site.

Doug was telling me he went over to the Labor Department to tell them whatfor, I guess, or at least to give them a little nudge in the right direction. But I appreciate that. The reason I bring that up is I do think it's very important to work with people like Doug and the union here, to help people understand that we need a million new jobs to fill the construction jobs over the next decade. And that's a challenge all of us have got to work on together.

We've got to make it clear there are jobs available. That's why these job fair hosts need to be notified about the opportunities available for our citizens. That's why we need guidance counselors to understand. That's why the Governors, like Kenny, must understand that there are great career opportunities available for people in the construction field, and that there's also an opportunity for these good people to be able to be trained and get the skills necessary, like right here at this union hall.

The other thing we've got to do is make sure our kids learn early, before it's too late. Listen, when I got up there, there was—too many of the kids were being shuffled from grade to grade without the skills necessary to succeed. It's time somebody said, "Let's stop this practice. For the sake of our future, let's make sure we raise the standards and hold people accountable in our public schools." We did. We've increased funding at the Federal level for public schools by some 49 percent since 2001. But now we're asking some questions like, "Is the money being well-spent? Can you read? Can you write? Can you add and subtract?" Seems like legitimate questions to ask. And if not, here is extra help to make sure our children can read, write, add and subtract—early, before it is too late.

There is more work to do to make sure a high school diploma means something. There is more work to do for intervention programs in junior high, for example. And there is more work to do to spend money to encourage our children in math and science, because the truth of the matter is, for example, those 1 million construction jobs are going to require a higher level skill than ever before. And our schools must lay the foundation to help these folks with the jobs of the 21st century. That's what we're talking about, and that's the kind of education program that makes

sense. That's why I'm at this facility. Education is the best way to make sure we keep jobs right here in America.

I want to talk about a couple more issues before I want to spend a little time on how to secure the country and make the world a more peaceful place. But I do want to talk about two issues related here to Nevada. One, water. I was raised in Midland, Texas. [*Applause*] There you go. [*Laughter*] Remember what it was like out there? No water. I understand how precious water is. People in Nevada understand how precious water is. And there is a role for the Federal Government. For example, there is a role for the Federal Government to resolve disputes like the Colorado River water dispute.

I instructed Gale Norton, my Secretary of the Interior, to work with all parties to develop innovative strategies, to develop conservation plans to help meet Nevada's water needs. And there is an agreement in place. After years of discussion and adherence to the status quo, we've got an agreement. What I'm telling you is, is that we see problems, and this administration works to solve them. We see problems—[*applause*].

Last summer we launched what's called Water 2025 initiative. Gale is a Westerner, by the way; she understands water needs. She understands the problems in the West. She understands there's competing interests for scarce water. This program promotes conservation, as I mentioned. It expands the use of voluntary water markets. It provides advanced technology, like automated pumping and canal controls. It funds research into new technologies to better deliver water and conserve resources. In other words, it is a comprehensive strategy to deal with a problem that needs to be dealt with.

And we look forward to working with the States and the local authorities to better safeguard this precious resource. I know the mayor of Henderson is with us today. Mr. Mayor, we will listen to you. And I know Kenny will listen to you. This is an effort where we've all got to work together to bring the stakeholders in place, so the people of this part of the world will have water not only today but in future years.

And we're spending money. My budget for Water 2025 more than doubles the $8.4 million that had been spent to date to $21 million. I mean, we're beginning an effort to make sure that the people of this part of the world understand how precious your resource is and how best to not only conserve it and use it but to develop it in a way that will enable your quality of life to continue on.

The other issue, of course, I want to talk about is Yucca Mountain. This is a vital question, and we need to keep facts, not politics, at the center of the debate. It's an issue that's been developing for a while. Since the 1987 congressional vote to focus exclusively on Yucca Mountain, Presidents have considered this issue, as did I. And when I campaigned here in this State, I said I would make a decision based upon science, not politics. I said I would listen to the scientists, those involved with determining whether or not this project could move forward in a safe manner. And that's exactly what I did. I listened to the people who know the facts and know the science, and made a decision.

Now, I've listened also, as well, to your Governor and Senator Ensign and to the Congressmen and to your fine Attorney General. They didn't agree with my decision. I understand that. They made themselves very clear. And I said, "Well, I appreciate your opinion, but I will—I'll tell you what I will do. I will allow this process to be appealed to the courts and to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and I will stand by the decision of the courts and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission."

Now, my opponent is trying to turn Yucca Mountain into a political poker chip. [*Laughter*] He says he's strongly against Yucca here in Nevada, but he voted for it several times. And so did his

runningmate. My point to you is that, if they're going to change, one day they may change again. [*Laughter*] I think we need—I think you need straight talk on this issue. I think you need somebody who is going to do what he says he's going to do.

Let me talk about one other subject. I know it's on your mind—it's clearly on my mind—and that's how best to secure our country. We—they're—first of all, no President wants to be a war President. That was my last choice. And the enemy attacked us, and we got to respond.

I'm going to share some lessons about September the 11th: first, the nature of the people that attacked us. I tell people that you cannot negotiate with these folks. You cannot reason with them. Their hearts are so filled with hatred, they're willing to take innocent life like that. These are people that—they only understand one thing, and that is force and justice. And that's what they will get. We will pursue them wherever they exist. [*Applause*] Thank you all.

See, I understand we must pursue them overseas so we do not have to face them here at home. I understand. The second lesson is that this is a different kind of war than we were used to, and this is a shadowy network of coldblooded killers that can hide in cities around the world where they can find safe haven. And therefore, in order to better secure America, we not only needed to say to them that we will bring you to justice, but we needed to say to their allies and people willing to harbor them, or feed them, or hide them that you're just as guilty as those who came and killed the people in America.

And when America speaks, it better mean what it says. And so when I said to the Taliban, "Give them up, or face serious consequences," I meant exactly what I said. And today the world is safer and America is safer because Afghanistan has been liberated from the Taliban. I want you—just think about this—in less than 4 years' time, Afghanistan has gone from a brutal dictatorship that denied many young girls the right to go to school, that was more than willing to drag their moms or women into the public square and whip them and, in some cases, kill them, to a society in which over 8 million people have registered to vote. They're going to have Presidential elections in October. Afghanistan is an ally in the war on terror.

Another lesson of September the 11th is that when we see a threat, we must take it seriously before it fully materializes. That is a vital lesson. It's a change, obviously, of doctrine because prior to 9/11, we used to think, "Well, gosh, if we saw a threat, we're safe anyway. It may affect somebody somewhere else, but it surely can't affect America." That's what changed on that fateful day. And it's really important for our country to understand it. I want you to know I clearly understand that.

And so, therefore, when we looked at—when we looked around the world and saw threats, we began to act in a different fashion. Now, look, I want—I would like to deal with all threats diplomatically. That's the first choice. The use of our military is the last option. And so we saw a threat with Saddam Hussein. You say, "Why did you see a threat?" Of course, we looked at intelligence and saw a threat, but we also remembered the nature of the regime of Saddam Hussein. He used weapons of mass destruction. He harbored terrorist organizations—Abu Nidal's organization. This is the guy that killed Leon Klinghoffer. He's a known terrorist, killed an American. He's in and out of Iraq. Actually, he received safe harbor in Iraq.

Now, Zarqawi's network—he's the people—he's the guy now—he just beheads people like that to try to shake our will and our conscience. Saddam Hussein paid the families of suiciders. You know, paying people whose loved one goes and kills somebody is a part of a terrorist act. He is a dangerous man. He was shooting at our pilots.

We had been to war with Saddam Hussein before. And he was a source of instability. And so I looked at the intelligence. Now remember, the United States Congress—I thought it was important to bring the Congress—get Congress involved with this very important matter. They understood the stakes. They looked at the intelligence. They remembered the nature of Saddam Hussein. Members of both political parties stood up and said, "We support the President, if he has to use force, in using force"—including my opponent.

It looked like for a while he was trying to squirm out of that vote. [*Laughter*] The other day, he said that knowing what we know today, he still—he agreed that the use of force in Iraq was necessary. I welcome that clarification. [*Laughter*] He's still got 82 days left in the campaign, though. [*Laughter*]

I went to the United Nations. See, I—as I told you, I think diplomacy should be tried first. And I went to the United Nations, and the U.N. Security Council voted 15 to nothing that said to the tyrant, "Disclose, disarm, or face serious consequences." And so the world was once again saying to Saddam, "You're a threat." Everybody recognized that in the post-9/11 world that a threat needed to be dealt with. He defied the world, as he had done for over a decade. He systematically deceived the inspectors. Remember, we sent inspectors in to try to find the truth, and they were systematically deceived. That's the reality. And so, after a period of time, I had a choice to make. Tony Blair had a choice to make. Other leaders had choices to make. And that is, do we forget the lessons of the modern world and hope for the best and hope that Saddam Hussein all of a sudden miraculously changes his attitude about America and terrorism and weapons, or do we take action necessary to defend ourselves and to spread freedom and peace? And given that choice, I will take action every time.

Knowing what we know today—no, I thought we were going to find stockpiles; everybody did. But he had the capability of making weapons. And if the world had turned away from watching Saddam, that capability could have been passed on to terrorist enemies. It's a risk we could not afford to take. Knowing what I know today, I would have made the same decision, and the world is better off for it. The world is better off for it. Because America has led, the world is safer.

We put together a great coalition. Over the next 4 years, I'll continue to work with our friends and allies. If you think about Afghanistan, there's nearly 40 nations there. If you think about Iraq, with allies and friends—Japan, South Korea, Great Britain, the Dutch, the Danes, Poles—countries all around the world understand what we know, that free societies are peaceful societies. They understand the stakes. They know what's really important. But I'll assure you, I'll never turn over America's national security decisions to leaders of other countries.

I also want to say to the loved ones who are here, those whose loved one wear a uniform, the Government has an obligation to your husbands, wives, sons, or daughters to make sure you've got all—your loved one has all he or she needs to fulfill the mission. That's an important part of this debate. And I would ask you to ask your fellow citizens to remember what happened when I submitted a supplemental funding request to the United States Congress in September of last year. It was an $87 billion request for more body armor and fuel and spare parts and ammunition, money necessary so that we could complete our missions. And it was overwhelmingly approved by the Congress. Members of both parties supported it; my opponent didn't. And he gave this explanation, he said, "I actually did vote for the $87 billion, before I voted against it." [*Laughter*] I think you need somebody who speaks plainly and

honors our commitment—honors the commitment of our Government to those who wear our uniform. And that $87 billion was necessary.

I believe these are historic times. I believe history—historians will look back and say this was a really important period. This is a time where we need firm resolve and clear vision about the stakes. But not only must we stay on the offense to protect our country and not only make sure our homeland defenses are wise and the strategies are good and the people are well-compensated—and you've just got to know a lot of people are working hard to protect us—but we've got to also take on another mission, and that is to deal with the conditions that give rise to terrorism.

So there's a long-term strategy, and it's spreading freedom. We, in America, understand that liberty can be a transforming power for societies. If you've got a loved one in Iraq—does anybody here have a loved one in Iraq? You do? Thank you. [*Applause*] Let me—I appreciate that. I want you to know that your loved one is serving the country and the world in a powerful way. Not only—as I said, we'll defeat people there so we don't have to face them here, but a free Iraq in the midst of the Middle East is going to be a transforming event. This is a part of the world where people—the people are desperate for freedom. This is a part of the world where people—they're frustrated, the deep resentments because they're not free. We in America believe everybody deserves to be free; we believe it's the Almighty God's gift to every man and woman on Earth—freedom.

And therefore, I want you all to know that the long-term consequences of a free Iraq will make our children safer; it will make the children in other parts of the world safer as well. It's going to—this is—these are transforming times.

I'll tell you an interesting story—at least I think it is. I was having lunch with the Prime Minister of Japan—a dinner with him, and he's a friend of mine. And there I was sitting down with the head of a country that my dad fought against, and I'm sure some of your dads fought against him too. He was an enemy, and he represented a country which was an enemy of our country. We lost a lot of lives in World War II because we fought each other. And after World War II, my predecessor and others understood, however, that a country could be transformed by liberty, by the habits of liberty. And they stuck to their guns. They didn't listen to the critics and the pessimists. And eventually, Japan became a self-governing nation where the people were free.

And therefore, the discussion had changed over a period of time, hadn't it, from one where there was war, and Prime Minister Koizumi and I were now discussing peace. We were discussing how best we could deal together with Kim Chong-iland his nuclear weapons ambitions. We were talking about the peace. This country loves peace. I want there to be a peaceful world. But I was able to have that conversation in large part because after World War II, there was a strategy to help our enemies become free countries. Someday, an American President will be sitting down with an elected leader from Iraq, talking about the peace, talking about how to make the world a more peaceful place.

That's what's at stake. And that's why it's really important for us to complete the mission. There's a lot of people watching America right now. They're wondering whether or not we've got what it takes to complete the mission. They hear things like, "Well, I'm going to substantially reduce our troops in 6 months." That's a bad signal, as far as I'm concerned. It's a signal that says all the enemy has to do is wait us out. It means that the Iraqis who are worried about their future—after all, what they don't want to do is go back to the day where a tyrant could come and summarily execute them if he felt like it; therefore, they're afraid to take risks for

peace. So they kind of say, "Well, I wonder whether or not this country really means what it says." It's essential that when America speaks, it means what it says, and that we should not be sending mixed signals to allies and enemy alike.

We will succeed—we will succeed. You know why we're going to succeed? One, we do have what it takes.

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. We do have what it takes. We've got the vision and the courage and the willingness to serve a great cause. The other reason we'll succeed is because people want to be free. People from all walks of life want to be free. Mothers and dads in Iraq want to raise their children in a peaceful environment, just like moms and dads here in America do. People long for peace. They want peace. They've got peace in their hearts. They long for a world where—that is a decent world. And that stands in stark contrast to the enemy. And we've been called——

Audience member. You rock, Mr. President! [*Laughter*]

The President. Thank you, sir. Let me finish by one story that is a compelling story. I've told it several times here on this trip and out on the road. It's the story about the time seven Iraqi citizens came to see me in the Oval Office. The Oval Office is a powerful place. It's—you know, people walk in and just get overwhelmed by the majesty of this shrine to democracy. I do, on a daily basis. And the only person I know that didn't was my mother, who walked in and continued to tell me what to do. Anyway—[*laughter*]—that's a cheap shot, I know.

Anyway, the seven men come in. They—they're Iraqi citizens. All seven had had their right hands cut off by Saddam Hussein because the currency—his currency had devalued and he needed to blame somebody. And one fellow explained to me why him, and it was because he had sold dinars to buy, I think he said euros or dollars to buy gold so he could then manufacture jewelry. He was a small merchant. And so he picks these seven guys out and cuts their right hands off. And then burns an X in their foreheads and charges them for the operation.

Fortunately, a documentary was made of the plights of these people. And a guy in Houston, Texas, saw it. He was a successful person who believed that you have a duty in life to help others, and flew these seven men over to Houston where they were fitted with new hands. And it was shortly thereafter that they came to see me. And it was—I'm telling you, it was a powerful moment to see the stark contrast between a society that—where somebody could just summarily say, "I don't like you; I'm going to chop your hand off," and a society full of compassionate people that were willing to heal the hurt by helping these people with a new hand. And that's what we're really working on.

I told these men there, I said, "Come in the Oval Office. I want you to be in a place where the office is bigger than the person." That's what free societies that are stable societies do. They have institutions that are bigger than the people. "And some day," I said to them, "you will have institutions bigger than your people, so that never again can somebody summarily disfigure you."

And that's what we're talking about, really, when you think about it. We're talking about the difference between good and evil. We're talking about the difference between compassion and tyranny. And we're talking about a world in which people are able to realize their hopes and dreams and aspirations without fear of brutal tyranny. America will be safer and the world will be better because of the actions we are taking today.

May God bless you all, and may God bless our country. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:02 a.m at the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and

Joiners of America International Training Facility. In his remarks, he referred to Douglas J. McCarron, general president, Douglas J. Banes, general vice president, and Andris J. Siling, general secretary-treasurer, United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America; Mike McCarron, executive secretary-treasurer, Southwest Regional Council of Carpenters; Dale Shoemaker, senior technical coordinator, United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America International Training Facility; William K. Irwin, Jr., executive director, Carpenters International Training Fund; television talk show host Jay Leno; Gov. Kenny C. Guinn of Nevada; Mayor James B. Gibson of Henderson, NV; Nevada State Attorney General Brian Sandoval; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; and Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea.

Remarks With Nancy Reagan in Bel Air, California
August 12, 2004

The President. Laura and I are honored to come by and pay our respects to Mrs. Reagan. We really admire Mrs. Reagan's strength and her love of a great President and her friendship. We really thank you for the tour of your beautiful backyard. [*Laughter*]

Mrs. Reagan. I'm so glad you came—so glad you came. Thanks so much.

The President. Thank you.

The First Lady. Thanks so much.

Mrs. Reagan. I'm always happy to see you.

The First Lady. Thank you very much.

Mrs. Reagan. And you met Duchess.

The President. And I met Duchess.

Mrs. Reagan. You met Duchess.

The First Lady. That's right.

The President. Thank you all.

The First Lady. Thanks, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:37 p.m. at the Reagan home. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Victory 2004 Dinner in Santa Monica, California
August 12, 2004

The President. Thanks for coming. And thanks for having us. Thank you all. Please be seated. Thanks for the warm, warm welcome.

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Thank you. Thank you all. Mine is the only line of work where you get introduced by your wife—[*laughter*]—and I'm really glad I did. I can't tell you how proud I am of Laura. She is a fabulous First Lady. I like to tell these folks I've been campaigning with recently, I said I'm going to give you some reasons to put me back in office, but perhaps the most important one of all is so that Laura is the First Lady for 4 more years. And by the way, it's a joy to campaign with her, and it's a great joy for both of us to campaign with our daughters. It's really been a fun experience for us to have Barbara and Jenna on the campaign trail with us. And it's kind