

our neighbor just like we'd like to be loved ourself.

I'm running for 4 more years to continue to rally the armies of compassion. See, I believe we can change this country one heart and one soul at a time by relying upon the true strength of America, which is the hearts and souls of the American people.

Today I met Rod Conover. He's involved with Project Read. He's a volunteer. He's taking time out of his life to help somebody else learn to read. See, we'll change this country. We'll change this country by calling upon the great love of the American people to serve something greater than themselves, to help somebody in need, to help the homeless, to feed the hungry, to help the addicted by surrounding with something the Government can't live, which is love. Now, Government can give money, but Government cannot give love. And so over the next 4 years, I'll continue to call upon the great spirit of the American people.

We're living in a—we've come through a lot together. The last 4 years have brought great challenges. I'll never forget the day Rudy and I went to the ruins of the Twin Towers. It was a very emotional day. I remember the workers in hardhats yelling at me, "Whatever it takes." I remember a worker looking me in the eye and saying, "Do not let me down." See, it's clear to me, and I know it's clear to Rudy, that that day, people took it personally on that site. I took it personally. I know you did as well. I have a duty that goes on. I wake up every day trying to figure out how best to secure this home-

land. I will never relent in defending America, whatever it takes.

We've done hard work over the past years, and there's more work to be done. During the next 4 years, we will spread ownership and opportunity so everybody can realize the great promise of America. During the next 4 years, we will continue to pass on the enduring values of our country to a younger generation. During the next 4 years, we will continue to lead in the cause of freedom and peace. With your support, I'll be a leader America can count on in a world of change.

For 4 years, I traveled this great country, including your great State, asking for the vote—4 years ago I did, asking for the vote. I said if you gave me a chance to serve in this high office, I would uphold the dignity and the honor of the office to which I had been elected. And with your help, I will do so for the next 4 years.

Thanks for coming. May God bless. Thank you all. Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:35 p.m. at Ricketts Park. In his remarks, he referred to Rudolph W. Giuliani, former mayor of New York City; former Representative Bill Redmond of New Mexico; Frank Dayish, Jr., Vice President, Navajo Nation, and his wife, Virginia; New Mexico State Representative Richard P. Cheney; Nancy Domenici, wife of Senator Pete Domenici; Linda Nighthorse Campbell, wife of Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell; Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya; President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan; and Prime Minister Ayad Allawi of the Iraqi Interim Government.

Remarks in Albuquerque, New Mexico August 26, 2004

The President. Thank you all. Thanks for coming. Thank you all.

Audience members. Four more years!
Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Thank you all for coming. Gosh, I appreciate so many coming out to say hello to Rudy. [*Laughter*] We were in Las Cruces and Farmington, and here we end up in the great city of Albuquerque. It's been a fantastic day in the Land of Enchantment.

I want to thank you all for coming out. I told Rudy, "You're going to like it here." I said, "You're going to see more cowboy hats than you see ties." No, we're right here in the heart and soul of America, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

I'm proud to be traveling with this good man. He's a great leader, a great friend, and a wonderful American. He showed the world great courage during traumatic times, and I'm proud to be standing by him. I'm proud he's out working for me. And I'm proud you all are here too. I'm here asking for your vote, and I'm here asking for your help. There's no doubt in my mind, with your help, we'll carry New Mexico and win a great victory in November.

I am sorry that Laura is not here. I kissed her goodbye in Crawford this morning. I said, "I'm heading west." I said, "I got to go work. I'm anxious for people to hear my story. I want people to know I've got more to do to lead this Nation for 4 more years." I'm really proud of Laura. I'm proud of her. She's a great mom and a wonderful wife. And she's a wonderful First Lady as well. Today I'm going to give you some reasons why I think you ought put me back in there, but perhaps the most important one of all is so that Laura will be First Lady for 4 more years.

I'm proud of my runningmate, Dick Cheney. He might be short on hair, but he's long on experience. He can get the job done.

I appreciate—listen, I enjoy working with Pete Domenici. What a good man Pete is. He's a—I'm proud to work with him. I know you're proud to call him Senator. I'm also really pleased to be here with Congresswoman Heather Wilson. She is as

good as they come in the United States Congress.

I want to thank all of my friends who are the grassroots activists, John Sanchez and Manny Lujan. I want to thank them for their work.

I appreciate the fact that Brooks and Dunn are here. What great Americans they are, and not only that, they can sing. Really proud to have them here. I want to thank Tony Lynn for announcing the program.

Most of all, I want to thank you for being here. I just want you to know I believe all of us in America have a duty to vote. And I would like for you to encourage your neighbors to register to vote. We have an obligation to do that, to vote in our society, and one way you can help in this campaign is to become a part of this massive registration campaign that we've got going and vote—register Republicans and independents and discerning Democrats. Remind them we've got more work to do. Remind them that with 4 more years, America will be a safer, stronger, and better country.

We've been through a lot together, and we've accomplished a great deal. But the only reason to look backward is to best determine who to lead us forward, and that's what I'm here to talk about. We've done a lot, but there is more to do to move America forward. We've got more to do to create jobs, more to do to improve our schools. We've got more to do to fight terror. We have got more to do to spread liberty and peace.

We've made much progress. I'm here to tell you I'm ready to lead the country for 4 more years to do more for the people.

We have more to do to make our public schools the centers of excellence we know they can be so that no child is left behind in America. We came to office 3½ years ago; too many children were being shuffled from grade to grade, year after year, without learning the basics. So we decided to try something different. We said, "We'll send more money back to the States, but

in return, we expect results.” We’re challenging the soft bigotry of low expectations. We’re raising the bar. We’re empowering parents. We believe in local control of schools, and we’re making progress.

There is more work to be done. We’ve got to make sure we’ve got more science and math courses for our high school kids. We’ve got to bring the Internet in to bring the latest to our classrooms. We must have intervention programs to make sure children do not slip behind. We want to make sure a high school diploma means something. After 4 more years, a rising generation will have the skills and the confidence necessary to realize the American Dream.

We have more to do to make quality health care available and affordable. You might remember the old Medicare debates of the past. Politician after politician say, “Give us a chance to strengthen Medicare,” and nothing got done. We got the job done. We now have a Medicare system that will allow seniors to make their own choices to meet their own needs, and starting in 2006, a Medicare system that will provide prescription drugs for our seniors.

We’ve done more. We’ve expanded community health centers for low-income Americans. We want people getting primary care in these centers, not in emergency rooms. We’ve created health savings accounts so families can save tax-free for their own health care needs.

There is more work to be done. Most people get their health care through jobs—their jobs, and most new jobs are created by small businesses. But many small businesses are having trouble affording health care. In order to allow small businesses to afford health care so American families get the help they need, we must allow small employers to join together to be able to purchase health care at the discounts that big companies get. We will harness technology to reduce costs and reduce errors. We will continue to expand research and find new cures. And in order to make sure health care is available, affordable in Albu-

querque, New Mexico, we must do something about the frivolous lawsuits that are running up the cost of your medicine.

See, I don’t think you can be pro-doctor and pro-patient and pro-plaintiff-attorney at the same time. I think you have to choose. My opponent made his choice, and he put him on the ticket. [*Laughter*] I made my choice. I have made my choice. I’m standing with the patients and the doctors, the nurses and the hospitals. I am for medical liability reform—now.

We’ve got more to do to make sure this economy is strong. Remember what we’ve been through in a short period of time. We’ve been through a recession. We’ve been through corporate scandals. We’ve been through the terror attacks.

But we’ve overcome those obstacles. We’ve overcome the obstacles because the American worker is great. We’ve overcome the obstacles because the entrepreneurial spirit is strong in America. We’ve overcome the obstacles because small-business owners are dreaming about expanding and creating new jobs. We’ve overcome the obstacles because our farmers and ranchers know what they’re doing.

We have overcome those obstacles because of two well-timed tax cuts. We didn’t try to pick winners or losers when it came to cutting taxes. We said, “If you pay taxes, you ought to get relief.” We also helped our families. Remember, we raised the child credit. We reduced the marriage penalty. The Tax Code ought to encourage marriage, not penalize marriage.

We helped our small businesses. Because we acted, our economy since last summer has grown at a rate as fast as nearly—as any rate in nearly 20 years. Over the last 12 months, we’ve added nearly 1.5 million new jobs. The unemployment rate across our country is 5.5 percent. That is well below the national average of the seventies, the eighties, and the nineties. The unemployment rate in the great State of New Mexico is 5.3 percent.

We are moving forward. We're not going to go backward. There is more work to be done. In order to keep jobs here in America, we must make sure our regulations are reasonable and fair. In order to keep jobs here in America, we need an energy policy that makes us less dependent on foreign sources of energy. In order to keep jobs here, we've got to do something about these junk lawsuits that are threatening the small-business job creators of America.

In order to make sure jobs stay here, we want other countries to treat us the way we treat them. Listen, we can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere, so long as the playing field is level.

In order to make sure jobs are here, we've got to have an education system that provides a lifetime of learning for America's workers. Listen, the job base is changing. And some of these new jobs that pay more require new skills. That's why I strongly support helping people go back to the community colleges all across America to gain the skills necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century.

In order to make sure jobs stay here and this economy continues to grow, we've got to be wise about how we spend your money. In order to keep jobs here and to keep the economy growing, we need to keep your taxes low. I think taxes are an issue in this campaign. My opponent has already promised over \$2 trillion of new spending.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. And we've still got the stretch run. [Laughter] We've still got September and October to go. And so they said, "How are you going to pay for it?" And he used that old, tired class warfare line, "We're just going to tax the rich." But you know how that works, don't you?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. You've heard them say "tax the rich." First of all, you can't tax the rich enough to pay for all the promises. And secondly, the rich are pretty good

about hiring accountants and lawyers. Generally, when you hear that, be careful because he's aiming his tax increase at you. But we're not going to let him have it. We're going to win in November.

We're doing some smart things. I passed an important law to protect the residents of this State and the forests from catastrophic wildfires.

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Our Healthy Forests Restoration Act is good law for New Mexico. It's important law to help us preserve these national treasures. The Cibola National Forest will benefit from this important legislation. We had a difference of opinion on this subject. My opponent said that the Healthy Forests Act was—really means we're taking a chainsaw to public forests. Then when he came out here to campaign, he turned his position around. He says he likes part of the law. [Laughter] I guess it's not only the wildfires that shift in the wind. [Laughter]

I'm running again because I understand we have more to do to wage and win the war against terrorism. Our future, America's future, depends on our willingness to lead in this world. If America shows uncertainty and weakness in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This will not happen on my watch.

The world changed on a terrible September morning, and since that day, we changed the world. Before September the 11th, Afghanistan served at the home base of Al Qaida, which trained and deployed thousands of killers to set up cells around the world, including America. Today, because we acted, Afghanistan is a rising democracy. Over 10 million people in that country have registered to vote in the upcoming election. Because we acted, Afghanistan is an ally in the war on terror. Because we acted, many young girls go to school for the first time in Afghanistan. Because we acted, America and the world are safer.

Before September the 11th, Libya was spending millions to acquire weapons of mass destruction. Today, because America and our allies have sent a strong and clear message, a message that's easy to understand, the leader of Libya abandoned his pursuit of weapons of mass destruction, and America and the world are safer.

Before September the 11th, the ruler of Iraq was a sworn enemy of America. He was defying the world and firing weapons at American pilots who were enforcing the world's sanctions. He had used weapons of mass destruction. He harbored terrorists. He invaded his neighbors. He subsidized the families of suiciders. He had murdered tens of thousands of his own people. He was a source of great instability in a volatile part of the world. He was a threat. One of the lessons of September the 11th that we must never forget is that we must deal with threats before they fully materialize.

I went to the United States Congress. I said, "This administration sees a threat." They looked at the intelligence I looked at. They remembered the history of Saddam Hussein, and they came to the same conclusion I did—including my opponent, who came to the same conclusion I did.

Because I believe we ought to try diplomacy before we ever commit troops, I went to the United Nations. I said to the world, "We see a threat." They looked at the same intelligence and concluded, with a 15-to-nothing vote in the Security Council that Saddam Hussein must disclose, disarm, or face serious consequences. And as he had for over a decade, Saddam Hussein refused to comply with the demands of the free world. As a matter of fact, we sent in inspectors. He systematically deceived the inspectors. So I had a choice to make: Either trust the word of a madman and forget the lessons of September the 11th, or take action to defend our country. Given that choice, I will defend America.

Even though we didn't find the stockpiles we expected to find, Saddam had the capability to make weapons of mass de-

struction, and he could have passed that capability on to the terrorist enemy. That's a risk we could not have afforded to take after September the 11th. Knowing what we know today, I would have taken the same action in Iraq.

America and the world are safer with Saddam Hussein sitting in a prison cell. Now, almost 2 years after he voted for the war in Iraq and about 7 months after switching positions to declare himself the antiwar candidate, my opponent has found another nuance. [*Laughter*] See, he now agrees it was the right decision to go into Iraq. After months of questioning my motives and even my credibility, he now agrees with me that even though we have not found the stockpiles we all thought he had, knowing everything we know today, he would have voted to go into Iraq and remove Saddam from power. And I want to thank him for clearing that up. There's still a little over 60 days in this campaign for him to change his mind again. [*Laughter*]

I'm running because I understand we have more to do. We will continue to work with our friends and allies around the world to aggressively pursue the terrorists in Iraq and Afghanistan and elsewhere. See, you cannot talk sense into these people. You cannot try to negotiate with them.

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. You cannot hope for the best.

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. We must engage these enemies overseas so we do not have to face them here at home.

America will continue to lead the world with confidence and moral clarity. See, we put together a strong coalition to help us. There's nearly 40 nations involved in Afghanistan, some 30 nations involved in Iraq. Over the next 4 years, we'll continue to build on our alliances and work with our friends. But I'll never turn over America's national security decisions to leaders of other countries.

We'll keep our commitments to help the people of Afghanistan and Iraq. We'll do so because when America says something, it better mean what it says in order to make the world a more peaceful place. We'll do so because it's in our interest they become democracies and peaceful societies. These nations are now governed by two strong leaders who believe in the hopes and aspirations of the people that live in those countries. We set a clear goal. We're for peaceful, democratic countries who can self-govern and who are allies in the war against these terrorists. And so our military forces are there to provide security as they head to elections, and we're there to help train Afghan and Iraqi forces so they can defeat the terrorists who are trying to stop and prevent the hopes of many from emerging. Our military will complete this mission as quickly as possible so our troops do not stay a day longer than necessary.

Our Nation's commitments are kept by the men and women of our military. At bases around the country, I have had the high privilege of meeting with those who defend our country and spread the peace. I've seen their great decency and their unselfish courage. I assure you, ladies and gentlemen, the cause of freedom is in really good hands.

I appreciate the veterans who are here today, who have set such a great example for those who wear the uniform.

Our troops must have the resources they need to fight and win the war on terror. They must have the full support of our Government. That's why last September, while our troops were in combat in Afghanistan and in Iraq, I proposed supplemental funding to support them in their missions. The legislation provided money for body armor and vital equipment, hazard pay, health benefits, ammunition, fuel, and spare parts. It was an important piece of legislation, and it received great bipartisan support. As a matter of fact, the support was so strong that only 12 Members of the United States Senate voted against it.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Two of those twelve Senators are my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. When they asked him about that vote, he said, "I actually did vote for the \$87 billion, before I voted against it." [Laughter] Doesn't sound like the way people in Albuquerque, New Mexico, talk to me. But they pressed him further, and he said he was proud of his vote. And they kept pressing, and he said, "Well, it was a complicated matter." There's nothing complicated about supporting our troops in combat.

In the long run, our security is not guaranteed by force alone. We must work to change the conditions that give rise to terror, poverty and hopelessness and resentment. See, a free and peaceful Iraq and a free and peaceful Afghanistan will be powerful examples—they'll be powerful examples to their neighbors. They'll be powerful examples in the part of the world that's desperate for liberty and freedom.

Free countries do not export terror. Free countries do not stifle the dreams of their citizens. By serving the ideal of liberty, we're bringing hope to others, and that makes America more secure. By serving the ideal of liberty, we're spreading the peace that we all want. And by serving the ideal of liberty, we're serving the deepest ideals of our Nation. We understand freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

Now, we've got more to do to protect our country. There's an enemy out there that still hates us. We have a difference of opinion on this. The other day, he said that going to war with the terrorists is actually improving their recruiting efforts. I think the logic is upside-down. I think it shows a misunderstanding of the enemy we face. See, during the 1990's, the terrorists were recruiting, and they were training for war with us long before we went to war

with them. They don't need an excuse for their hatred. Staying on the offense is necessary to protect this country. See, you don't create terrorists by fighting back. You defeat the terrorists by fighting back.

There's a lot of good people working on your behalfs, a lot of good people at the Federal level and the State level and the local level responding to threats. We've got work to do, and we'll continue to do it to make sure that we get the best intelligence possible so we can react to the threats. We need the PATRIOT Act renewed. Listen, the PATRIOT Act is a vital tool for those who are working to disrupt the terrorist networks. We created the Department of Homeland Security. We're continuing to work to better safeguard our borders and our ports. We're working better between levels of government.

But I got to tell you, reform isn't easy, particularly in Washington, DC. [Laughter] There's a lot of entrenched interests there. There's a lot of people who are willing to hold on to the status quo. It's not enough to advocate reform, you've got to be able to get the job done.

So when you're out there campaigning, I want you to remind people that when it comes to reforming our schools to provide an excellent education for every child, we're getting the job done. When it comes to health care reforms for our seniors and for our families, we're getting the job done. When it comes to improving our economy and creating jobs, we're getting the job done. When it comes to better securing our homeland and fighting the forces of terror and spreading freedom and peace, we're getting the job done. And remind your friends and neighbors, when it comes time to choose a President, put somebody back in there who can get the job done.

We're living in a time of change, and I understand change can be unsettling. It's an exciting time, but it's a time that Government needs to change its ways of thinking. Government needs to not be giving dictates to people; Government needs to

be helping people. One way to do so is to understand that a lot of moms are working these days, and therefore, people need flex-time and comp-time so they can adjust their work schedules to meet the demands of family. One way to help people with changing times is to encourage an ownership society. That's why we want people owning their own health care accounts, so they can manage their own accounts and take them from job to job if they need to.

These are changing times, and they're exciting times. I see a lot of the younger folks out here today. I thank you for coming. But when it comes time to think about Social Security, baby boomers like me are in good shape. [Laughter] But some younger workers are going to have a problem because there's a lot of baby boomers, and the Social Security system needs to be made fiscally sound for you. And I believe the best way to do so is to let younger workers take some of their own money in personal savings accounts so they can carry it from one generation to the next.

We want more people owning their own business in America. You know, there's some fantastic success stories right here in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where people had a dream and they built their own companies that they can call their own. In changing times, if you own your own home, it can help provide stability. The homeownership rate is at an alltime high in America. We'll continue to pursue policies to encourage people to own their own home. There's nothing better than somebody opening that front door and saying, "Welcome to my house. Thank you for coming to my home." We understand in America that if you own something, you have a vital stake in the future of our country.

In changing times, there are some things that won't change, our belief in liberty, our belief in opportunity, and our belief in the nonnegotiable demands of human dignity. The individual values we try to live by

shouldn't change, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. We will continue to support the institutions that give us direction and purpose, our families, our schools, and our religious congregations.

We stand for institutions like marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. We stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every person counts. We stand for judges who faithfully interpret the law instead of legislating from the bench.

We stand for a culture of responsibility in this country. Listen, the culture is changing from one that has said, "If it feels good, just go ahead and do it," and "If you've got a problem, blame somebody else," to a culture in which each of us understands we're responsible for the decisions we make in life. If you're fortunate enough to be a mom or a dad, you're responsible for loving your child with all your heart and all your soul. If you're worried about the quality of the education in the community in which you live, you're responsible for doing something about it. If you're a CEO in corporate America, you are responsible for telling the truth to your shareholders and your employees. And in a responsibility society, each of us is responsible for loving our neighbor just like we'd like to be loved ourselves.

I'm running for 4 more years to continue to rally the armies of compassion which exist all across our country. Listen, the great strength of America is the hearts and souls of the American citizens. People are volunteering all over our country to help improve somebody's life. I met with Bernice Young. She volunteered more than 11,000 hours at the Children's Hospital of New Mexico. She's taking time out of her life to help make somebody else's life better. See, I believe societies will change. I believe our country will change, one heart, one soul, one conscience at a time, if we rally the great army of compassion, which is willing to love a neighbor.

For all Americans, these years in our history will always stand apart. There are quiet times in the life of a nation when little is expected of its leaders. This isn't one of those times. This is a time where we need firm resolve, clear vision, and strong belief in the values that make us a great nation.

None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began. Rudy and I were in the ruins of the Twin Towers on September the 14th, 2001. It's a day I will never forget. It is a day Rudy will never forget. I remember the workers in hardhats yelling at me, "Whatever it takes, President. Whatever it takes." I remember shaking the hand of a man who had just gotten out of the rubble. He had bloodshot eyes. He said, "Do not let me down." It was a—I wake up every morning thinking about how better to protect this country. I will never relent in defending America, whatever it takes.

We have come through much together, and we've done a lot of hard work. But there's more to be done. During the next 4 years, we will spread ownership and opportunity to every corner of this country. We will pass the enduring values of our country to another generation. We will continue to lead the cause of freedom and peace, and we will prevail.

With your support and prayers, I will be a leader America can count on in a time of change. Four years ago, I traveled this great country and your wonderful State asking for the vote. I said if you honored me with this great responsibility, I would uphold the dignity and the honor of the office to which I had been elected. With your help, I will do so for the next 4 years.

God bless. Thank you for coming. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. at the Albuquerque Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Rudolph W. Giuliani, former mayor of New York City; John Sanchez and Manuel Lujan, Jr., executive

committee members, Republican Party of New Mexico; entertainers Brooks and Dunn; radio show host Tony Lynn; Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya;

President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan; and Prime Minister Ayad Allawi of the Iraqi Interim Government.

Statement on Facilitation of Cooperative Conservation *August 26, 2004*

Americans have a long tradition of conservation and stewardship of our Nation's lands and other natural resources. It was this ethic that led 30 years ago to passage of landmark legislation that continues to help improve America's water and air quality. Over the last three decades, we have made remarkable progress, working together to meet our conservation goals and improve the quality of our air and water.

Today I have directed the Federal agencies that oversee environmental and natural resource policies and programs to promote

cooperative conservation in full partnership with States, local governments, tribes, and individuals. Local involvement is critical to ensuring successful, effective, and long-lasting conservation results. The Executive order on cooperative conservation that I have signed today will help us continue to make sure that decisions in Washington, DC, are well-informed by those closest to the land and their communities.

NOTE: The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks on Hurricane Charley in Miami, Florida *August 27, 2004*

I have just been briefed by Mike Brown here at FEMA about the progress that the Federal Government, in working with the State government, is making toward helping these poor people who got hurt by Hurricane Charley and Tropical Storm Bonnie.

When I came down here a while ago, I said that—I promised that there would be a full-scale Federal focus on helping the State of Florida. And I tasked Mike Brown to make sure that that happened, and he has done a great job. I appreciate you serving the people of this State.

And Jeb has done a fine job too. He is—he understands that a Governor must lead, and he had led. And he has helped focus resources on helping these people that need help.

There is further work to be done here in Florida. Chairman Bill Young is with us. We have been discussing the need for a supplemental fund, supplemental funding request of the Congress for \$2 billion to help continue to rebuild Florida. The chairman and I had a good discussion on this issue. He knows Florida well. He knows the west coast of Florida really well. And as importantly, he knows how the Congress works well. And he said as soon as they get back, they'll take this matter up. This money will help for cleanup and housing and other services, small-business loans that are provided through FEMA.

As well, we're concerned about the citrus growers here in Florida, the nursery men and women in the State of Florida. We