

of the office to which I had been elected. With your hard work, with your help, I will do so for 4 more years.

God bless. And thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:06 p.m. at the Canton Palace Theatre. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor George M. McKelvey

of Youngstown, OH, who introduced the President; Gov. Bob Taft and Lt. Gov. Jennette B. Bradley of Ohio; Mary Regula, wife of Representative Ralph Regula; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

The President's Radio Address

October 23, 2004

Good morning. In the 3 years since September the 11th attacks, our Government has acted decisively to protect the homeland.

This week, I took another important step by signing the 2005 Homeland Security Appropriations Act. This bill provides essential resources for Coast Guard patrols and port security, for the Federal Air Marshal program, and for technology that will defend aircraft against missiles. With this law, we are adding new resources to patrol our borders and to verify the identity of foreign visitors to America. The new law also includes vital money for first-responders and for better security of chemical facilities and nuclear plants and water treatment plants and bridges and subways and tunnels.

All these measures show the unwavering commitment of our Government. And since 2001, we have tripled overall spending for homeland security. We are doing everything in our power to protect the American people. There is more to do, and we are moving forward.

To protect America, our country needs the best possible intelligence. Chairman Tom Kean and other members of the 9/11 Commission made thoughtful and valuable recommendations on intelligence reform. My administration is already implementing the vast majority of those recommendations that can be enacted without a vote of Congress. We are expanding and

strengthening the capabilities of the CIA. We are transforming the FBI into an agency whose primary focus is stopping terrorism. We have established the Terrorist Threat Integration Center so we can bring together all the available intelligence on terrorist threats in one place.

But other changes require new laws. Congress needs to create the position of the National Intelligence Director, with strong authority over the personnel and budgets of our intelligence agencies. These and other reforms are necessary to make our intelligence community more effective and to stay ahead of the threats. My administration has sent proposed legislation to Capitol Hill, and we are working with Congress to pass a good bill. I urge Congress to act quickly, so I can sign these needed reforms into law.

The surest way to defend our country is to stay on the offensive against terrorists. In an era of weapons of mass destruction, waiting for threats to arrive at our doorsteps is to invite disaster. Tyrants and terrorists will not give us polite notice before they attack our country. As long as I am the Commander in Chief, I will confront dangers abroad so we do not have to face them here at home.

My opponent has a fundamental misunderstanding of the war on terror. Senator Kerry was recently asked how September the 11th had changed him. He replied,

quote, “It didn’t change me much at all,” end quote. And his unchanged world view becomes obvious when he calls the war on terror primarily an intelligence and law enforcement operation. That is very dangerous thinking.

We must fight the war on terror with every asset of our national power. We are waging a global campaign from the mountains of central Asia to the deserts of the Middle East and from the Horn of Africa to the Philippines. These efforts are paying off. Since September the 11th, 2001, more than three-quarters of Al Qaida’s key members and associates have been killed, captured, or detained. The rest of them know we will hunt them down.

America faces a grave threat, and our Government is doing everything in its power to confront and defeat that threat.

We’re making progress in protecting our homeland and progress against the terrorists who seek to harm our Nation. And by staying focused and determined, we will prevail.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:46 a.m. on October 22 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 23. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 22 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Thomas H. Kean, Chairman, National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (9/11 Commission). The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks in Fort Myers, Florida October 23, 2004

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

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

The President. It’s getting close to voting time, and I am here to ask for your help. Get your friends and neighbors to go to the polls. Remind people we have a duty to vote. And when you get them headed to the polls—and by the way, don’t overlook discerning Democrats—[laughter]—people like Senator Zell Miller. When you get them headed to the polls, remind them, if they want a safer America, a stronger America, and a better America, to put me and Dick Cheney back in office.

I want to thank you all for coming. It’s a great way to start a Saturday morning, at the ballpark with a lot of great Americans. I’m so happy that Laura is traveling with me today. Today I’m going to talk about why I think you need to put me

back in office for 4 more years, but perhaps the most important reason of all is so that Laura is the First Lady for 4 more years.

My runningmate, Dick Cheney, is out working hard. Listen, I readily concede, he does not have the waviest hair in the race. [Laughter] You’ll be happy to hear I didn’t pick him because of his hairdo. [Laughter] I picked him because of his judgment and his experience, and he’s getting the job done for the American people.

I’m proud of my brother Jeb. When the hurricanes hit this part of your State, I came by to try to lend my support, to remind people that the Federal Government will do everything we can do to help the people of this part of the world get their feet back on the ground. But your Governor showed great compassion and great leadership.

I want to thank Connie Mack for joining us today. He represented this State and