AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

Macedonia back on the road to Europe. The United States offers its strong support to President Trajkovski and to the democratic Government of Macedonia as they move forward to achieve this goal.

Remarks at a Fundraising Dinner for Senator Wayne Allard and Governor Bill Owens in Denver, Colorado

August 14, 2001

Thank you, all. Thank you very much. Thank you all very much. Okay, sit down, please. Thank you, all.

Madame Secretary, thank you for that kind introduction. You read it just like I wrote it. [*Laughter*] I'm really proud of my appointment of Gale Norton to the Secretary of the Interior. She is doing a fabulous job.

I think one of the things that people are going to find about our administration is we bring some common sense to Washington, DC. And Gale Norton brings a lot of common sense—common sense—to the Interior Department. And it needed a little common sense. [*Laughter*]

I'm sorry my wife isn't with me, but I want to give you a family report. I'm extremely proud of our First Lady. She's doing a fabulous job. She's working on a reading initiative that will have a profound impact all across America. Right now she's worrying about the two dogs and the cat on our ranch in Crawford, Texas.

We love our ranch in Crawford, Texas. But I must say, after having been in Estes Park—[*laughter*]—it's good to get out of Washington. [*Laughter*] I love my job. I want to thank all of you here who helped me become the President. It's a huge honor. But it's also a—and I like going to the Oval Office every day. As you can imagine, walking into this great office is—it's hard to describe how I feel every morning.

But it's also important to get out and see the people, too. It's important to keep balance and perspective. We find that on our ranch in central Texas, and I find it as I travel the heartland. No better place to come than the great State of Colorado, where people are down-to-earth and work hard and adhere to great American values. And I want to thank you for the warm welcome I've received today.

I appreciate so very much traveling today with United States Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell. He is a—he is an interesting man—[*laughter*]—who I'm proud to call friend. He brings a lot of class to the United States Senate, and he represents your State with a lot of dignity.

I want to thank the Members of the Congressional delegation who are here, as well: Scott McInnis, who just came off Mount McKinley today to say hello to his President. And I want to thank you, Scott. I traveled today with Tom Tancredo and Bob Schaffer, as well. Both of these men—all three of these men are good, solid citizens in the United States Congress, and I appreciate their friendship. I appreciate their advice. I get a lot of advice from Members of Congress these days. [*Laughter*] Most of all, I appreciate their votes. Thank you all for being here.

I want to thank my friend, Joe Rogers, the Lieutenant Governor of the State of Colorado, for being here. Thank you, Joe. And Mr. Chairman, thank you for your leadership. Where is he? There he is, down there. I appreciate you taking on the lead. I appreciate you toiling in the trenches. I appreciate you make sure Colorado remains in the public—Republican camp in 2002.

I'm here to help two good men get reelected, and I appreciate you all's work helping them get reelected. There's no finer Governor in the United States than Bill Owens. Jeb Bush isn't all that bad. [*Laughter*] But he's done a great job. He is the kind of fellow you want in office because he does what he says he's going to do.

That sounds pretty simple to people from the outside, but a lot of times in the political process, that's not the way it works. A lot of times, you have candidates running for office who say one thing, and they don't mean it. They go out and tell the people all across the State that they're going to do something for education, but they really don't mean it, or they can't get it done.

This is a man who has done in office what he said he would do. He's cut the taxes, he's made education a priority, and you need to send him back. You need to put him back

in the statehouse. Plus, he married well. [*Laughter*] Frances is a great First Lady for the State of Colorado.

Bill is going to work hard; I know. And he's going to run on a positive agenda; that's what the people want. He told me today on the airplane that although he's done a lot for education, he's going to continue to stay on education. And we're going to help him with a good bill out of Washington, DC, that will give more power and flexibility to the States. Education is his priority, and it needs to be his priority. It's the people's priority of the State of Colorado.

And I'm proud to stand up here for Wayne, as well. He's a good man. He works hard, and I need him in the Senate. I need somebody who I can count on in the United States Senate.

And Colorado needs him in the Senate. Colorado needs a man who understands natural resources and who brings balance to the issue. Colorado needs a man who understands energy. Colorado needs a fiscal conservative in the United States Senate. Colorado needs a commonsense man, and that man is Wayne Allard.

Let me say one other thing. It's much better to have two United States Senators who will have their phone call returned from the White House than one. [*Laughter*] It's much better to have two people working on the State's business, who can work closely with an administration. It's important to have somebody who is an ally in the Oval Office, to represent your State. And I view Wayne as an ally, and I think he views me as an ally of Colorado. That's important.

And the voters of Colorado have got to understand the practical aspects of how Washington works. And it's going to work a lot better for Colorado when you send Wayne Allard back to the United States Senate.

We're getting a lot done in the Nation's Capital. I can remember watching Washington in the so-called days of gridlock, and the anger and the finger-pointing, and say, we can do better than that. This great land of ours needs a Government that is more willing to listen, more respectful tone, so that when people are coming up in our system, they're not discouraged by what they see.

Democracy depends upon our citizenry becoming involved. It means that those of us who have been entrusted with power must set a good tone and a good example. And we're beginning to get that done in Washington. Oh, there is still some name-calling and some finger-pointing and some gnashing of teeth, but it's getting better.

And one reason it's getting better is because we're getting some things done, starting with a meaningful, real tax cut for the American people. I can remember in the course of the campaign people would say, "Well, he's just saying it. He doesn't mean that." But it's reality, and it needed to be reality, because our economy began to slow down. And one of the things a commonsense administration does is solve problems.

And one way you solve the problem of an economic slowdown is give people some of their money back. That's called good, sound fiscal policy.

Today, when we were riding on the road up to Estes Park, I was so proud to see a lot of citizens holding that sign up saying, "Thanks for the $600, Mr. President." But you know what? It wasn't my $600 to give. It was their money in the first place.

I think we're finally making the point in Washington that the so-called surplus is not the Government's money; it is the people's money. And when we've got too much of it in Washington, we're going to send it back to the people who pay the bills.

And I want to thank Wayne for his help on repealing the estate tax. That tax was punitive; it's unnecessary; and we're finally going to get rid of it in the Tax Code of the United States.

You hear a lot of them talking in Washington about, "Oh, the tax cut might cause a deficit." No. What causes a deficit is too much spending. And we've got a good budget in place, and I expect the United States Congress to adhere to the budget we have in place. And if they try to over-spend—I know none of the Members up here will—but I can assure you, when we get back this fall, if they try to bust the budget, you'll have a President who will veto those budget-busting bills.

There's a new day in Washington, DC. It used to be they'd have a bidding contest to

see who could get out of town first. Those days are over. We've set a responsible budget, passed by both the House and the Senate. And I expect members of both political parties to adhere to that budget. It's the best way to make sure our economy recovers—sending money back to the taxpayers and having fiscal sanity in the halls of Government in Washington, DC.

We passed an education bill that was one of my top priorities. It's a bill that's going to make our schools better. It's a bill that gives more flexibility at the local level. It consolidates programs. But it also does something that you've done here in Colorado: It challenges the soft bigotry of low expectations. It says, every child can learn. And we believe that we must measure to determine whether or not every child is learning.

This piece of Federal legislation says, for the first time, if you take any Federal money, you, the State, must measure; you must show us whether or not children are learning to read and write and add and subtract. And if they are, there will be ample praise, but if not, we will not stand idly by. We will not continue to fund failure. There are no second-rate children in America, and there are no second-rate dreams, as far as this administration is concerned.

Oh, I've heard all the complaints about testing. They say, "There's too much Government if you test." But we're results-oriented people. We expect there to be a return on taxpayers' money. We want to know, if we're spending money on the schools out of Washington, DC, or you're spending money on the schools out of Colorado—it seems like it makes sense to ask the question, what are the results?

And then they say, "If you test, it's racist." Folks, let me tell you something as plainly as I can: It's racist not to test. It's so much easier to quit on inner-city black kids or kids whose parents may not speak English as their first language. It's so much easier to shuffle them through the system. But those days are gone, as far as this President is concerned. I want every child to learn to read and write and add and subtract.

I believe every child can learn in America. And it starts with teaching every child to read. And that's exactly what we're going to start doing in America. We're going to ask the Governors, like Owens, to have a reading program based upon sound science, not based upon some feel-good curriculum but based upon what works. Phonics works, by the way, and it needs to be integrated into the reading programs all across America.

Ours is the first administration to put out an energy plan. And we needed an energy plan. I called upon our good Vice President—and by the way, his health is strong, and he's a fabulous Vice President of the United States. He comes from right around the corner, Wyoming. And as he likes to say, who thought those three electoral votes weren't important? [*Laughter*]

But we've developed an energy policy that makes sense for America. On the one hand, it says, we can do a better job of conserving our resources, and we must. We must use the new technologies available, or becoming available, to make better use of scarce supply of energy.

One of the interesting initiatives we've taken in Washington, DC, is we've got these vampire-busting devices. A vampire is a—a cell deal you can plug in the wall to charge your cell phone. And when your cell phone is not on the charger, even though the charger is plugged in, it's still eating electricity. So some smart person came along and developed a cell phone charger that doesn't eat electricity when the cell phone is not plugged in.

And so our Federal Government is going to start using these devices to set the example, to show that we can be good stewards of our Nation's energy. All of us must do a better job. But make no mistake about it, we need more supply, as well.

The State of California leads our Nation when it comes to conservation measures. But they ran out of energy. They're building 12 energy—12 powerplants, and that's good, and we helped to expedite the process to get the 12 powerplants built. But those 12 powerplants are going to be powered by natural gas, and this Nation better have an administration that starts asking, "Where's that gas going to come from if they're going to power the powerplants?" We need more supply available for American consumers, as well.

There's a lot of people who don't have faith in our technology in America. I have faith in technology. And like many of you in the energy sector, you know we can go into parts of Alaska and drill for natural gas, for precious natural gas, without destroying the environment. It's time to have a commonsense energy policy for the United States of America.

Ours is an administration that told our United States military that we would help them remain strong. And it starts with paying our troops better, and we have. The budgets we submitted increased pay, helped on health insurance, and improved the housing of the men and women who wear the uniform. And we're going to do so in the 2002 budget, as well.

But this is an administration who is not going to needlessly spend money. We want to spend money on a clear, strategic vision. We want our military to be a military not only that can keep the peace today but a military ready to keep the peace tomorrow. And so I've asked Secretary Rumsfeld to prepare a strategic vision for what our military ought to look like, so when we spend taxpayers' money, we spend it wisely.

And along those lines, I appreciate the support of the Members up here who recognize what I recognize, that the cold war is over. It's time to discard the treaties that codified the cold war and to develop a new strategic relationship with a country like Russia, so we can more ably keep the peace. Russia is no longer our enemy. The cold war no longer exists. The enemies that the United States face are terrorists, rogue nations that will develop weapons of mass destruction and point them at us or our allies, cyberterrorists.

And our defenses must reflect the true threats facing us. So that's why I was proud to represent our Nation in sitting down with the Russian President. And I told him, I said, "Mr. President, you're not our enemy and, therefore, we need to get rid of the ABM Treaty. We need to have a new way of thinking, a way that will allow a peaceful nation like the United States to develop the necessary defenses to protect our people, our allies, our friends all around the world."

It's time to think differently about the defense of the United States of America. There are some at this table who—all at this table who support me, but some in the United States Senate are nervous about getting rid of the relics of the cold war. And I don't agree with them. I don't agree with them.

And the reason I don't is because I understand the intention of America. We love the peace. We're a nation that relies upon strength to keep the peace. We're a nation that says we can develop the technologies necessary to make the entire world more peaceful. It's my pledge to the American people; it's my pledge to our allies overseas; and it's a pledge I intend to keep.

We're making progress on what they call a Patients' Bill of Rights—it recognizes that patients need to be more empowered when it comes to making choices in the medical field. I say we're making progress because there needs to be balance in the law. It's important to give our docs and patients more opportunity to interface, and the law will.

But we cannot allow lawsuits to drive up the cost of medicine, that will force people out of health insurance. There are too many people uninsured in America today.

I think we can get a good bill out of the conference committee. We got one good bill already out of the House, a not-so-good bill out of the Senate. I'm hopeful that we can come together and get a good bill that I can sign, that will bring balance to health care.

And, finally, we're making great progress in Washington, DC, on a very important initiative. It's called the Faith-Based and Community Development Initiative. It's an initiative that really takes welfare a step beyond where we are today.

First of all, we recognize there are lot of people hurt in America, people who have lost hope and faith in our country, people who don't believe the American Dream was meant for them, people hooked on drugs and are destitute. We should never give up on those folks in our country. We're a compassionate nation, and we're a wealthy nation, and we ought to focus our resources and compassion so it helps.

But Governments can't make people love one another. I wish we could—I'd sign the law. Allard would sponsor it, Nighthorse would vote for it, and I would sign it. But the good news is, we are a loving nation.

There's a lot of people who have heard the call to love their neighbor just like they'd like to be loved themselves.

We're a nation, the fabric of which is created by little communities of conscience all over America. I was at one today, at the YMCA camp in Estes Park, a place where they teach children right from wrong by teaching values. There are drug treatment programs all across our country who rely upon faith. They change a person's heart, and that person changes their lives.

We've got prison ministries that are helping prisoners find the walk. We've got all kinds of faith-based initiatives that are literally changing our country one heart, one soul, one conscious at a time. And the Federal Government must not fear faith-based programs in America. We must empower them. We must welcome them into all neighborhoods, to make sure the American Dream reaches across every neighborhood.

My dream for America is to usher in a period of personal responsibility, a culture that rejects the old times that said, if it feels good, do it, and if you've got a problem, blame somebody else. I believe there's a better culture for the country. It's one that says each of us must be responsible for the decisions we make in life.

If you're a mom or a dad, you're responsible for your child. The most important job you'll ever have is to love your child with all your heart and all your soul. If you're a neighbor—got a neighbor in need, it's up to you, not your Government, to help the neighbor in need. Be responsible with our environment, responsible by supporting teachers in the school system. Be a responsible citizen.

But it starts with having responsible leadership. And that's why I'm so proud to stand and represent and urge for the reelection of Wayne Allard and Bill Owens, who are responsible citizens, who bring dignity and honor to the offices to which they have been elected.

It's an honor to be here. May God bless you all, and may God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:41 p.m. in the Plaza Ballroom at the Adam's Mark Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Bob Beauprez, State chairman, Republican State Central Committee of Colorado; Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; and President Vladimir Putin of Russia.

Exchange With Reporters at Griegos Elementary School in Albuquerque, New Mexico

August 15, 2001

Situation in the Middle East

Q. One question about the Middle East, sir. Do you believe that they are on the brink of war there? And have you come to believe that it's no longer realistic——

The President. [*Inaudible*]—the violence in the Middle East, but I'm confident that the leadership there will understand that war is avoidable and will work to bring peace. The parties must—must—make up their mind that peace is preferable to war. The suicide bombings have increased; there's too many of them. And Mr. Arafat must do everything in his power to discourage the suicide bombers. And the Israelis must be restrained in their response.

There's too much violence in the Middle East, but I'm confident that we can avoid war so long as the leadership makes the concerted effort to do so. My administration is constantly in touch with the parties. I spoke to Secretary Powell this morning. We're working with the appropriate folks. The Egyptians are in town. Not only are we talking to the Palestinians and the Israelis, we're talking to other nations in the neighborhood to encourage them to convince Mr. Arafat to do everything he can to prevent and stop suicide bombings and needless violence.

Congratulations, Gregory [David Gregory, NBC News]. You actually got me to say something. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:40 a.m. in room 117. In his remarks, the President referred to Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.