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Senate seem to think we can afford to do nothing, that the economy will get better on its own, sooner or later. I say that if your job is in danger or you have a loved one out of work, you want that recovery sooner, not later.

We need a plan to lengthen unemployment benefits; we need a plan to shorten the recession. The Senate should act on both. America's workers cannot afford more delay.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9:20 a.m. on January 4 at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 5. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 4 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at Parkrose High School in Portland, Oregon

January 5, 2002

Well, thank you all very much for such a gracious and warm welcome. It's nice to be back here in Oregon. I'm impressed by the Mighty Ducks; they're awfully good. I wasn't a believer; now I am. [*Laughter*] They're good. Of course, they gave my Texas boys a good lesson last year, as I recall. [*Laughter*]

But thanks for coming out on a Saturday afternoon to say hello. I was earlier in California, and then I'm here—went to a community college. You've got a wonderful community college here in the Portland area, which is worried about helping people find work. And I went by and saw the good instructors there that are trying to help people help themselves.

And I come in here to be able to share some thoughts with you. And then I'm going to hustle on home for dinner—[*laughter*]—right there in Crawford, Texas.

I want to thank Katie Harman for being here. It was a pleasure to meet your mayor. Mayor Katz, thank you for coming. It's very gracious for you to be here today.

I picked a good man from Portland to represent us in New Zealand; that's my friend Butch Swindells, who is now the Ambassador to New Zealand.

I spent a little time with some people that work for a company called InFocus, which is a company—[*applause*]. John, it sounds like you packed the crowd. [*Laughter*] Either that, or you've got a big family. [*Laughter*] But I want to thank John Harker and his team for coming to talk to me about how best they think we can stimulate growth. I want to thank them for employing people in this part of the world, for trying to figure out how to grow their economy, for worrying about their workforce, as well as making a quality product. I'm going to share some thoughts that John shared with me in a little bit. But I do want to thank you for coming.

I also want to thank my friends Senator Gordon Smith and Greg Walden. They were hitchhiking in California and they needed—[*laughter*]. They were looking for a free ride, and Air Force One happened to be available. [*Laughter*] But they did fly down with me. I'm impressed by these two good men.

We spent a lot of time talking about Oregon. They're deeply concerned about the fact that a lot of people aren't working; I am, too. They're deeply concerned about the fact that parts of your State are not being treated very well. We spent time talking about the Klamath Basin. I share their concern about people who make a living off the land. And I told these two good men that we'll do everything we can to make sure water is available for people who farm.

I also want to thank two of the Congressmen from this area, Earl Blumenauer and Darlene Hooley, for being here, as well. Thank you so much for coming; I appreciate you being here. I know you had better things to do on Saturday afternoon, and here you are, stuck with me. [*Laughter*] Thanks for coming; it means a lot.

You know, there were some—some of the things that are happening in Washington, I expected. And there was one thing that happened was not expected. It's been a heck of a year. [*Laughter*] I will tell you, before I get into the expected and unexpected, I believe 2002 is going to be a fabulous year for America.

I remember meeting with business leaders in Austin, Texas—this is before I began heading north to become sworn in as your President—and there was deep concern about the

economy then. A year ago December, people were saying, "This economy is soft, and we're going to be in for a rough ride." It was not unexpected to see the economic slowdown. And I want to share some thoughts with you about how we can reverse the trend—although I'm optimistic about our economy. There are some numbers coming out that appear that things are getting a little better: The unemployment rate is 5.8 percent. But if you're unemployed, it's 100 percent, and I'm worried about that.

The unexpected, obviously, was September the 11th, when evil people decided to attack America. I say "evil people" because I don't view this as a religious war. I view this as a struggle of good versus evil. And make no mistake about it, good will prevail.

We are making steady progress in the first theater on the war against terror. We have made it clear to people that we weren't going to allow the injustice done to America to stand, and that if anybody harbored these people or fed them or clothed them or tried to provide them help, they were just as guilty as the terrorists were.

These people are like parasites, and they find a host. And for those of you who ranch, you understand what a parasite can do to the host cow, for example; too many parasites weaken the host. What happened was, was that they became parasites in Afghanistan. But we weakened the host; the Taliban no longer is in power.

And as a result, this great nation should be proud of the fact that we led a coalition that liberated women and children, a coalition that brought down a government that was so incredibly repressive it's hard for those of us who live in America to understand. Some of my finest memories thus far of this war against terror was the joy that came on people's faces when they realized that the Taliban would no longer hold them hostage to an outdated, outmoded, dictatorial point of view.

I am so proud of our country. I'm proud of the fact that at the same time that we waged a war against Al Qaida and the Taliban, we fed the people. I read an important headline the other day that—it said it looked like we avoided a terrible disaster by providing food for thousands of people in Afghanistan. While we dropped bombs, we also dropped food and medicine and clothing to make sure that the innocents in Afghanistan could survive the brutal winter in that part of the world. We're a great nation.

We're making steady progress, and I use the word "steady" because sometimes it seems like there is a certain impatience in the airwaves. But I don't believe there's an impatience amongst the American people. As a matter of fact, I think the American people are very patient. They understand this is a difficult assignment, and they understand, like I do, that we've got to be patient in order to be successful.

But we've accomplished a lot in 90 days. That's not a very long period of time. It's been a long period of time for Al Qaida—[*laughter*]—but it hasn't been a very long period of time for us.

The reason we've had—we've got a good strategy, and we've got a great military. For those of you who serve in our military or for those of you whose sons or daughters or relatives serve in the military, thank you.

But I do want to remind our fellow citizens that we're now in a dangerous phase of this war in Afghanistan, because those who are willing to send young people to their suicide death hide in caves, themselves, to save their own skin. And I told the world, just like I told the American people: You can hide, but we will smoke you out and bring you to justice.

I'm so sorry to report that Sergeant Nathan Chapman lost his life yesterday. But I wanted—I want Sergeant Chapman's family to know that the cause for which he died is just and noble, the cause of freedom and the hope that our children and grandchildren will be able to grow up in a world that is free of the barbaric behavior of terrorism.

We're on a mission, and we will not yield until the mission is complete. The war against terror is broader than just Afghanistan, and that is exactly what I have made clear to members of the vast coalition which we have put together. I said there are no shades of gray in this fight for civilization—there are no shades of gray. Either you're with the United States of America, or you're against the United States of America.

I'm sure there were some people who were anxious to sit on the fence for a while. But what they've come to realize is that this Nation, when aroused, is a mighty nation, a nation that, when we make up our mind we're going to do something, we're going to do it. We're going to shake terrorism loose wherever it exists and bring those to justice who have hurt America and bring those to justice who might hurt America.

Let me tell you that part of this war is overseas, but part of it is here at home. My biggest job as your President is to make sure no one harms the American people. My biggest job is to rally the resources of this country, and have a homeland defense that will take every lead, every idea, every hint that somebody may harm us and rout them out, and give them a chance to protect America, and give them a chance to make this land secure.

And if we find somebody who wants to harm America, who espouses the philosophy that's terrorist and bent, I can assure you we will bring that person to justice.

This Nation is on alert, and it should be, but one of the things we're not going to let the terrorists do is to cause us not to behave like Americans and enjoy our freedoms and enjoy our neighborhoods and enjoy travel and enjoy the great wonders of our country. They think they can shut us down; they've got the wrong country they're dealing with.

There is a new spirit in this country, and a unity that is so powerful and so real that even a fellow who is hermetically sealed in the White House can feel it. [*Laughter*] I am proud of the Nation.

And we should not respond one way abroad and have a different attitude about issues that face us at home. Here's what I think: I think it's time for Congress to focus on what's best for America, and not political parties. I believe we need to set priorities and get positive things done.

I'm getting ready to sign an education bill on Tuesday. My friends in Midland, Texas, will not believe it when they turn on C–SPAN or one of these other channels because I am going to stand up and say to the Nation: One, this is a good piece of legislation and, two, I want to thank Senator Ted Kennedy for working on it with me. He's done a fine job. It shows what's possible when you set aside party—listen, I'm a proud party man, but I'm American first, and that's what we ought to be dealing with when it comes to legislation. And there are troubling signs that some in the Nation's Capital want to go back to the old ways, and I don't think we ought to let them do that. I think we ought to focus on what's good for the country.

And take the issue of the economy. Like yourselves, I'm deeply concerned about the fact that Oregon leads the country when it comes to unemployment, and we've got to do something about that. First, my principle is this: In tough times people need an unemployment check, but for the long term, what they need is a paycheck, and we've got to figure out how to get jobs going.

I think it's very important for us to extend unemployment benefits, including monies to help people pay for their health care, for those whose lives were affected on 9/11. I think it's very important for our country to do this. I know there is the will to get that done in Washington, DC. It makes sense that we help people.

I met with the people in the community college today, a chemical engineer and an electrical engineer who were reliant upon the high-tech world to make a living. They got laid off. They need these benefits so they can help themselves and be prepared when the economy recovers.

But any economic stimulus plan must also expand the job base. We ought to be asking ourselves, what does it take to increase more jobs so people can find work? And that starts with understanding that the biggest job creators in America are the small businesses and entrepreneurs of America.

I mentioned that last winter we got the indications that the economy was slowing down. And that's one of the reasons I fought so hard for tax relief. Because I understand that if the economy is growing down—slowing down, the best thing to do is to give people their own money back. The best thing to do is—because the Government doesn't create wealth, the Government creates an environment in which the entrepreneurial spirit can flourish.

There is an amazing new kind of economic theory working its way through Washington,

and it said that tax relief causes recessions. [*Laughter*] I'm not exactly sure what economic book that came out of, but if you want to get your way out of a recession, you provide tax relief. The worst thing you can do—the worst thing you can do is raise taxes in a recession. And yet, some in Washington, DC, are talking about getting rid of the tax cuts. I can't think of anything worse for growing our economy. The answer to those who want to raise taxes is: No, you're not going to raise taxes.

Most small businesses are sole proprietorships or, perhaps, a limited partnership. And when you cut personal income taxes, you're really affecting the ability of small businesses to grow. The question we ought to ask is, how do you expand the job base?

I spent time with John and the people of his good company. I like the idea of providing incentives to encourage corporate America to make investments in capital which is equal to jobs eventually. We ought to have an economic stimulus package that says, let's create more jobs for the American people. And we ought to get on about the American people's business—put politics aside and come together and do what's right for this country.

We have the ingredients for a plan. There's a bill that came out of the House; there was one that could have come out of the Senate; the votes were there. And so I just hope some of the Senators that kind of stood in the way of getting an economic plan done listen to the people and hear the voices of the people and come back and do what's right for the country.

I'll tell you something about America: The people are the true strength of this country. And we can talk about Government all we want to talk about, but the thing that makes this country great is our people. I have been so proud of the American people. I love the stories that had to do with the aftermath of September the 11th. When they heard that women of cover, women of the Muslim faith, were worried about going outside their home because somebody might take severe action against them, Jewish women and Christian women in the suburb of Detroit called up on the phone and said, "We want to help you go to the store. We want to provide whatever comfort we can so you can go about your lives." That's the America I know, and that's the America I love.

It's been an amazing event—series of events that have taken place. One of the most heartening things for me is to know that thousands of Americans are reassessing their values. Moms and dads are asking what they can do to be better parents—that, as a result of the evildoer, not only are we responding militarily and not only have we put this broad coalition together that says we'll rid the world of terror, but here at home people are saying, "Gosh, let me reassess my life." It's so important for moms and dads to know that the most important job they will ever have is to love their children with all their heart and all their soul.

I'm so pleased to report to you that the great fabric of the country, in terms of helping people, exists because of faith-based institutions, regardless of their religion; all across neighborhoods in America, that people are asking the question, "What can I do to help"; that the great mosaic of America is made up of the millions of acts of kindness which takes place every single day. September the 11th was an attack on our country, but it didn't affect our heart; it didn't affect our soul.

My great hope for the year 2002 is that people who want to work can find a job.

My hope is that our military is safe in their mission. I understand the war on terror is going to beyond probably 2002. I have no unrealistic aspirations about a calendar, a quick calendar.

But my true hope, as well, is that the great compassion of America and the value system that has made us so different and so unique continues to be vibrant and strong; that people, when they want to know how to help America, turn to a neighbor in need and say, "I want to help, to provide comfort for a child who may need a loving mentor," to say to somebody elderly on your block, "Gosh, I want to provide you company."

That's the great—that's my hope for the country, that our compassion continues to well up and that this great American experience continues to touch every possible heart. I pray for peace, I pray for prosperity, and I pray for the greatest land on the face of the Earth—America.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:15 p.m. in the school's Aldo Rossi Field House. In his remarks, he referred to Katie Harman, Miss America 2002; Mayor Vera Katz of Portland; Charles J. Swindells, U.S. Ambassador to New Zealand; John V. Harker, president and chief executive officer, InFocus Corp.; Representative Greg Walden of Oregon; and Sfc. Nathan Ross Chapman, USA, who was killed January 4 by hostile fire in Afghanistan.

Remarks Following a Meeting With the Economic Team and the Federal Reserve Board Chairman and an Exchange With Reporters

January 7, 2002

The President. I want to thank Chairman Greenspan for coming. He's here to offer his independent advice and counsel about the state of our economy. I want to thank my economic team for keeping me abreast of what we're learning during our Christmas break. I look forward to a substantive discussion about how to wisely put policy in place that will help this economy recover.

I'm—we're making good progress in winning the war in Afghanistan, and we've got to make good progress about helping people find work. The cornerstone of any good policy is going to be to take care of—help people help themselves, and take care of those who may have lost their job as a result of 9/11. But always remember, the most important thing for those who have lost their job is to be able to find work. And so the question I'm going to ask, and the question I hope Congress asks, is, how best to create jobs? What can you do to encourage economic growth so that people who want to work can find work?

I'm optimistic that 2002 is going to be a better year than 2001. And we will discuss ways here to make—to figure out how Government can make that happen. One thing I will do, after the course of these discussions and some discussions later on this week, will put in my budget an economic stimulus package.

And speaking of that, I hope that when Congress comes back they will have listened to their constituents and that Congress will realize that America, like me, is tired of partisan bickering, that we ought to come together, we ought to unify around some sensible policy and not try to play politics with tax relief or, for that matter, economic stimulus packages.

I'll be glad to answer a few questions. Fournier [Ron Fournier, Associated Press].

National Priorities and the Federal Budget

Q. Mr. President, can you increase funding for the military and homeland security without dipping into the Social Security and Medicare accounts? And Chairman Greenspan, if I could——

The President. Well, wait. I promised him that he could come. He's an independent soul, and he can have a press conference elsewhere. But one of the things we're not going to do is drag the Chairman into a press conference. Otherwise, he won't come back—[*laughter*]—to the White House.

Q. I'm sure he would——

The President. Well, you can find him at his place of business. Sorry to tell you how to do—it's a new year. [*Laughter*] I plan to be much more assertive with the press.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—going to ask him if he thought the recession was over, that's all.

The President. Okay. I said to the American people that this Nation might have to run deficits in time of war, in times of a national emergency, or in times of a recession. And we're still in all three. We had a national emergency; we're trying to win a war; and we're in a recession. So I have no problem figuring out ways to win the war, figuring out ways to protect the homeland—and those will be the priorities of my budget—and at the same time—and spending the money necessary to do both—and at the same time, recognizing that we may not balance the budget for this year.

It makes sense to spend money necessary to win the war; it makes sense to spend money necessary to protect the homeland. And we're in a recession. There are some talk about raising taxes. That would be a disaster, to raise taxes in the midst of a recession. Even—I think you'll find that to be—most economists agree with that point of view. Certainly, if they're fair about it, they will say that.