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I also believe strongly that the 1994 Northwest Forest Plan made sense. It was a plan where people from different constituency groups came together to talk about how to, first, make the forests healthy. And that is the primary concern of this policy or any policy—ought to be how to manage our treasure. But at the same time, the plan talked about how to protect the wildlife habitat found here in Oregon, how to make sure that recreational areas were in good shape.

And there was a dividend, by the way, to the Northwest plan of 1.1 billion board feet taken a year of sustainable timbering and that, of course, is so people can find work. And that makes sense to me, particularly in a place and a part of the world where people are having trouble finding work.

Good forest policy yield a dividend. They yield healthy forests. They yield places where people can bring their families. They protect the endangered species, but it also—one of the dividends is work, where people can put food on the table. And that's important. The human condition is very important, as far as I'm concerned. When somebody is looking for work who can't find work, we need to do something about it.

So I want to thank you all for welcoming us here today. This is a classic example of what is possible, given what happened and what is happening. It is possible to have sound forest policy that will protect against fire. It's possible. It is possible for us to work together to achieve a good strategy to protect a national treasure.

My administration looks forward to working with both Republican and Democrat alike to forge the policies to leave behind a legacy of healthy forests.

Thanks for coming. Thank you for your concern, your deep concern about this beautiful State, this wonderful area.

May God bless you all, and may God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:50 a.m. following a tour of the Squire Peak fire area. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. John Kitzhaber of Oregon; Gov. Dirk Kempthorne of Idaho; Gov. Judy Martz of Montana; Gov. Jane Dee Hull of Arizona; and Ron Wenker, district manager, Medford District Bureau of Land Management, Medford, OR.

Remarks to the Community in Central Point, Oregon

August 22, 2002

Thank you all very much for coming. Thanks for—please be seated, unless of course you don't have a chair. [*Laughter*] Thanks for that. Thank you all for such a warm welcome. It's such an honor to be here in Jackson County.

I have come for a couple of reasons. First, I have come to express our deepest condolences for those whose lives have been affected by these fires and to thank the yellowshirts, the hard-working firefighters. I appreciate the sacrifice you all make to protect your neighbors. One of the things you learn growing up in small-town Texas or small-town Oregon is that you learn to be neighborly. And the idea of people sacrificing to serve their neighbors is something that makes this country great. So I want to thank you all for what you do.

I also want to tell you, our job is to make sure we do everything we can to prevent forest fires from happening in the first place. That's one of our responsibilities, and that's why I went up to Jacksonville to talk about a policy that is based upon common sense. It's not a political deal. It's not a Republican idea. It's not a Democrat idea. It's an American idea to preserve our forests so that we can—that's one of the hurdles we've got to address here in the country. That's one of the challenges we've got to meet, is how to preserve our national treasure.

We've got other challenges. Listen, anytime anybody who wants to find work, who can't find work, it means we've got a problem. So I want to talk about the job we have of making sure we grow our economy, so people can work.

And then what I want to talk about—I want to talk about the fact that we've got another challenge, and that is how best to protect our homeland from the killers. And I want to tell you how we're going to win the war on terror, and we are going to win the war on terror.

I want to thank members of my administration for coming out here. They're kind of used to the West, since they are from the

West, and that would be the Secretary of Agriculture, Ann Veneman, and the Secretary of Interior, Gale Norton. These two ladies are doing a fine job, really fine job. I'm proud they're on my team.

I appreciate so very much Gordon Smith for introducing me and being a friend. I'm proud of the service that he has given to the State of Oregon. He's a hard-working man. He's a family man. He's a good, decent citizen. And I want to appreciate—and I want to say how much I appreciate Senator Ron Wyden for being here as well. I think it's an important gesture to show that forest policy can be commonsense policy. I appreciate you.

The honorable citizens—and so is your Congressman, Greg Walden. [*Applause*] It sounds like they remember you, Greg. [*Laughter*] I remember him, because all he does is talk about Oregon. [*Laughter*] I want to thank Governor Judy Martz and Governor Jane Dee Hull, Governors from Montana and Arizona, for coming. These are fine—I wish I could say they were here—they came to hear my speech. They came to promote good fire policy. They got stuck listening to the speech. [*Laughter*] But I'm proud to call them friends. I had the honor of being a Governor at one time, and I knew these two ladies. And they're good ones, and I want to thank them for coming.

I also want to thank the mayor of Central Point, Oregon, Bill Walton, for receiving me earlier. I want to thank Michael Draper, who is the western director of the International Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners Union, for being here. You thought Michael would have gotten you a better seat. [*Laughter*] But thank you all for coming. I want to thank Nolan Colegrove, who is the president of the Intertribal Timber Council. He came up from California. I had a good visit with him. He's a good, solid thinker and a reasonable fellow.

I want to thank my friends from the Klamath River Basin who are here. I want to appreciate your working with us to make sure that people who make the living off the land had enough water to survive. I want to thank the members of the Student Conservation Association who are here. [*Applause*] You'd think your relatives would be clapping too, but—[*laughter*]—thank you for your concern for our environment. Thanks for your hard work to put into practice commonsense policies to preserve the forest land.

I want to introduce Matt Epstein, who is here. The reason I bring up Matt is, everywhere I go, when I land, I try to welcome somebody to—a member of what we call the USA Freedom Corps, out at Air Force One, to thank them. But it also gives me a chance to remind our country what a unique land we are. We have people who volunteer their time to make their communities a better place.

Matt teaches kids how to read. Matt worries about those who don't have enough food. Matt also works hard to promote good forest management policy. He not only does it on his own land, but he promotes good forest policy so people understand the difference between kind of theory and good practice. Matt is a citizen who cares deeply about the community in which he lives. He is a soldier in the army of compassion. Matt understands what I know, that one person can't do everything, but one person can do something to make the community in which we live a better place. So it's my honor to introduce Matt Epstein and his wife, Donna. Thank you for coming. Where are you, Matt? There he is. Hi, Matt. Hi, Donna. Thank you.

We've got some challenges that face our economy; there's no question about it. I mean, the first three quarters of my Presidency, we were in recession. That means the economy was going backwards; it was negative growth. The next three quarters we've had positive growth. But about halfway through that time, the enemy hit us, and it affected our economy. And then to make the challenge even more, we found out some of the folks were cooking the books. Some of the people decided that in order to get ahead, they wouldn't tell the truth.

Oh, we've had some tough times in our economy, and I know you know what I'm talking about right here in this part of Oregon. Times are tough. But let me tell you something, so is America. Our economy has strengths to equal those challenges. I mean, after all, we've got the most productive farmers and ranchers in the world. We've got the most productive workers in the world. We've

got a great climate for small businesses, and the entrepreneurial spirit is strong in America.

No, we've got the ingredients to overcome the challenge. But there's still work to do. And let me describe some of the work that needs to get done. I believe a healthy economy will mean that we work to have—in order to have a healthy economy, we've got to have a healthy forest policy. I mean, if you have good forest policy, it will yield to a better economy. After all, the fires that have devastated the West create a drag on the economy. It costs money to fight these fires. It means people lose property. There's opportunity lost. No, good forest policy not only is important for the preservation and conservation of good forests for future generations, it's good for our economy.

And yet, I think we need to be honest with the American people. The forest policy of our Government is misguided policy. It doesn't work. We need to thin. We need to make our forests healthy by using some common sense. We need to understand, if you let kindling build up and there's a lightning strike, you're going to get yourself a big fire. That's what we've got to understand. [*Laughter*]

We've got to understand that it makes sense to clear brush. We've got to make sense—it makes sense to encourage people to make sure that the forest not only are healthy from disease, but are healthy from fire. That's what we've got to do here in America. We haven't done that in the past. We just haven't done it, and we're now paying the price.

And so we're going to change the forest policy in Washington. And that's why I've got my Secretaries here. They know what I know, that we've got to change the policy, starting with setting priorities, right off the bat, about getting after those areas that are dangerous, dangerous to communities, dangerous to habitat, dangerous to recreational areas. There are some high-priority areas that we need to declare emergencies and get to thinning now, before it's too late.

And we have a problem with the regulatory body there in Washington. I mean, there's so many regulations and so much red-tape that it takes a little bit of effort to ball up the efforts to make the forests healthy. And plus, there's just too many lawsuits, just endless litigation. We want to make sure our citizens have the right to the courthouse. People ought to have a right to express themselves, no question about it. But there's a fine balance between people expressing their selves and their opinions and using litigation to keep the United States of America from enacting commonsense forest policy.

We've made some progress through administration action. We can thin on emergency basis, like I just mentioned. We'll speed up the process of developing environmental assessments, while considering the long-term threat that fire-susceptible forests pose to endangered species. We'll make sure that people have their voice, but aren't able to tie it all up. And I need to work with Congress, and I need help from Congress. And I appreciate Senator Smith and Senator Wyden's willingness to do what is right for the people of Oregon. They want to work together.

There's too much bickering in Washington. Like, it's kind of a zero-sum attitude. No, what we need is to understand that what I'm talking about makes sense. And this isn't a chance for one political party to get an upper hand on another political party. This is just common sense for what's best for not only the forests and the preservation and conservation of forests but what's best for the people who live around the forests. That's what this is.

People are beginning to get the message. I mean, Americans who have no idea what good forest policy means are beginning to see the fires on TV. It's a sad way for people to learn, but it's happening, and we're beginning to make some progress. There's some—recently I signed what they call a supplemental bill. And in that bill there was some—the Black Hills National Forest, east of here, got some treatment about how to thin, how to make sure that that forest was well preserved. My attitude is, if it's good enough for that part of South Dakota, it's good enough for Oregon.

No, I want our forests healthy, and I want our economy healthy. That's why I strongly support the 1994 Northwest Forest Plan, a plan which should allow the production of a billion board feet of timber per year. This

is a plan that was a well-thought-out plan. It's a plan that was put together to protect wildlife habitat, to protect recreational areas. But it's a plan that's got another dividend, besides a healthy forest. It means 100,000 more jobs for people to be able to—[*applause*]. This would be sustainable timber harvesting on a small portion of the forest. The prior administration developed and agreed to this plan. I support the plan. Congress needs to pass the laws necessary to implement the plan. Good forest policy will be good for the economy. Good forest policy will mean we will have left a legacy for future generations.

You know, I'll never forget our tax relief debate. I remember telling people that where I came from, at least the economic book that I believe in says, "If you've got tough times in your economy, you got to let people keep more of their own money." Here's the theory behind that. If you let a person keep their own money—and by the way, we're not talking about the Government's money. When we're spending money, we're talking about the people's money. If you let somebody keep their own money, they're likely to demand a good or a service. And if they demand a good or a service, somebody is likely to produce that good or service. And when somebody produces a good and service, somebody is more likely to find work. And so therefore, in the face of this recession, the tax cut came at the right time in American economic history.

Now people say, "Well, you know, it didn't have an effect." Of course it had an effect. Let me tell you who it had an effect on. It had an effect not only on people who pay the bills. It had an effect on small-business owners. Seventy percent of new job creation in America comes from our small-business owners, comes from our entrepreneurs. Most of those small businesses, because they are sole proprietorships or limited partnerships, pay income taxes on the personal income tax level. So when you drop the income tax rates, really what you're doing is, you're stimulating job creation by putting a shot in the arm to the entrepreneurs, the small-business owners of America.

This tax reform slashed the marriage penalty. It makes sense to me that the Tax Code ought to encourage marriage, not discourage marriage. After all, families—a family unit is the strength of the country. And for the sake of the small-business owners and the people who make a living off the land, the farmers and ranchers, we put the death tax on its way to extinction. But the problem is, because of a quirk in the nature of the rules, all this comes—it doesn't stay stuck. Let me put it to you that way. [*Laughter*] In other words, it comes back into being. The tax rates go back up to where they were. The death tax isn't repealed. The marriage penalty goes back up to where it is. That's just the nature of how the Senate rules work. For the sake of economic growth, for the sake of job creation, for the sake of helping people stay on their farms and ranches, we need to make the tax relief permanent.

There are too many construction projects that aren't moving forward because the project managers can't find terrorism insurance. There's too many hardhats not working in America. There's over 8 billion projects which are not going forward, because the insurance premiums—they just can't can't insurance for a potential terrorist attack. It makes sense for the Congress to act on this. The United States Congress ought to provide a floor for terrorism insurance, so we can get our hardhats back to working again. But I caution the Congress, we need a bill that worries more about the workers and not about the trial lawyers in America.

And speaking about trial lawyers, I am worried about liability for doctors. I'm worried about it. And here's what I'm worried about. I'm worried about frivolous and junk lawsuits, frivolous and junk lawsuits that are making it harder for our citizens to get access to health care. That worries me. It worries me that frivolous and junk lawsuits are running up the cost of medicine, because make no mistake about it, anytime there is these huge settlements that go forward, you pay.

Now look, I repeat, if somebody gets injured, they ought to have their day in court, no question about it. That's a system that I value and a system you value. But these frivolous and junk lawsuits are denying people who have actually been injured their day in court. They're making it hard to find doctors. They're running up the cost of medicine. For

the sake of good, quality, affordable, and accessible health care, we need medical liability reform in Washington, DC. And we need it now, before people lose their doctors in rural America.

I want to tell you a quick story. I was in Mississippi during my so-called vacation. I traveled to Mississippi. [*Laughter*] And the—I met a fellow who had—is a religious man, and he heard the call of taking his practice, his medical practice, into the Mississippi Delta, which is a poor, poor region of America. It's—a significant percentage of the population there is African American. These poor folks need health care. And he felt like—that God gave him the talents necessary to be a doctor, and he felt like he needed to use those talents to help people who could not afford health care. But because of the junk lawsuits, they ran him out of town; they ran him out of the State. I'm going to tell you something, if you look around rural Oregon, you're going to find the same thing is happening to you. Now, we need to have commonsense reform of our medical liability laws, so people can get good health care at affordable prices in America.

I've got a piece of legislation which is important to job creation here in America and that gives me the capacity to negotiate trade agreements. I say that's important. I understand there's some farmers and ranchers who don't believe in trade—and I don't blame you, because you know what, you've been—always dealt out of the mix.

But here's my attitude about this. First of all, fortunately, we produce more food than we need. Imagine being the head of a country where you're worried about your next meal for the American people. We produce more food than we need because we're good at what we do. And if you're good at something you do, you ought to promote that which we do. We ought to be using American food to feed the world. We ought to have a President—and I will use that tool to open up markets for Oregon farm and ranch products.

In order to make sure the economy grows, we need pension protections. Listen, we need—if you're one of these 401(k)s with your company stock, you ought to be able to diversify after a reasonable period of time, so you're not locked in. And by the way, the law that I'm about to describe we passed says—that we just passed—says that if the boss gets to sell his stock, you ought to get to sell yours. There's some commonsense pension—and so I hope Congress gets after it when we get back and get me a pension bill that will help those who have 401(k)s get the best information possible, the best investment advice possible, so they can better manage their accounts.

And I'll tell you one other thing that we did. I signed the law that was the most important corporate reform law since Franklin Roosevelt was your President. It said this, it said: The books are going to be honest; the auditors will be audited; the numbers are going to be real; and the criminals in America will be punished.

We're not going to have this in America, where those who should be responsible to employees and shareholders feel like they can cut corners. When I gave the speech about corporate responsibility in New York, I said in my speech, the business schools in America need to be willing to teach right from wrong. And that's what the curriculum ought to do. And I was working the ropeline, and probably one of the hardhat types was sitting up there, was sitting on the rope line, said, "If you want to send the right message, if you want to teach the lesson, just put a couple of them in handcuffs." That's the best ethics lesson that we can have in America.

America is coming to understand by far the vast majority—by far the vast majority of our chief executive officers are honorable, decent people. They tell the truth. They treat their shareholders with respect. They care deeply about the plight of their employees. But this corporate task force I put together is serious business. And we're going to find those who cheat, and we're going to prosecute them, and they're going to find out that, instead of easy money, they've got hard time ahead of them.

We're making progress on the economic front. After all, the conditions are right for growth. I want you to think about this: Inflation is low; interest rates are low; productivity is up; consumer spending is strong. We've got the capacity to trade more. We've got the ingredients for growth. We've got some

hurdles to cross, but you just need to know, I'm not going to rest until people who want to find work are able to find a job.

I also want you to know, I'm not going to rest until this homeland is secure. There's an enemy out there; there just is. The way I like to put it to kids who write letters in or ask the question—I hope you share this with them—is that people hate us because we love freedom. People—it's hard for people to understand, particularly youngsters, why anybody would attack us the way they did, or would want to continue to attack us. But you've got to tell them that your great country stands for something that they can't stand, which is every life matters. Every individual counts. Every person has got worth, and we love freedom in America.

The more we value the ability to worship God the way we see fit, the more they hate us. The more we honor church and synagogue and mosque, the more they hate us. The more we speak our mind freely, the more they hate us. The more free our press is, the more they hate us. And therefore, since we're not going to yield to our freedoms, since we're not going to yield the values we hold dear, we've got to do everything we can to defend the homeland.

There are a lot of people working overtime to protect America. Everytime we get a hint, we're moving on it. There's a lot of good people at the Federal level, the State level, and the local level running down every kind of lead, every kind of possibility. We take everything seriously here in America, because we now understand that there's an enemy out there.

And that's why I asked Congress to work with me to make sure that at the Federal level, and eventually at the State and local level, we do everything we can to protect the homeland. I proposed a Department of Homeland Security. Look, I didn't run for office saying, "Vote for me. The Government is going to be bigger." That wasn't my promise. I did say, "I'll try to make it better." And I'm concerned by the fact that there's over 100 agencies involved with homeland security. They're scattered everywhere in Washington, which makes it awfully hard to hold anybody to account. The number one—my number one goal and my number one job now is to protect the homeland from the enemy, and therefore, I ought to have the tools necessary to do so, and that starts with the Department of Homeland Security.

And we're making some pretty good progress on it, but I need the tools, and so does my Secretary need the tools, to be able to move the right people at the right place at the right time, to respond to any threat. And unfortunately, that's not the way the Senate bill looks right now. You see, some Senators are more worried about their own turf than they are protecting the American people. I am not going to accept a homeland security bill that has a book that thick trying to micromanage the Department, when all I'm asking for is the same flexibility that they've given other Presidents and that they've given to manage the airports. All I want to do is to be able to respond. I'm not interested in redtape. I'm not interested in micromanagement. I'm interested in doing what's right for the American people.

And let me give you just one example. Let me just give you one example. It's important for us in America to know who's coming in the country, what they're bringing into the country, and whether or not they're leaving when they say they're going to leave. That's really important for us to know. And yet when you go down there on the border, in my part of the world, you've got one uniform in the Border Patrol; then you've got the INS; then you've got your Customs. It seems like, to me, that we need the flexibility necessary to meld those agencies together, to be able to transfer people around, to be able to better protect our border for the sake of the homeland security of the United States of America.

So there's a lot of good people working hard. There really are, and I'm proud of them. And I'm proud to report to you that our FBI and CIA are talking. I mean, people are buttoned up. They understand the job. They know the priority. They understand. And that's good. But you've got to know how I think. The best way to secure the homeland is to hunt the killers down, one by one, and that's what we're going to do.

It's a different kind of war we face here in America. It's not like the old days where you could measure the size of the enemy by

the number of tanks he had or the number of airplanes they were flying. You can't measure progress by which hedgerow we've taken. This is a different kind of war. This is a war where we face coldblooded killers—that's all they are—who hide in caves and send youngsters to their death. They hide in a cave, and they send some poor, unsuspecting soul to their death. There is no cave deep enough, however—there's no cave where they can hide from—you see, when it comes to defending freedom, this great Nation is relentless and patient and tough. Anytime—anybody who wants to take away something we hold dear is going to find out what this country is made out of.

I can't imagine what was going through their mind. I can't imagine what was going through their mind. They must have thought that we were so self-absorbed and so materialistic and so worried about our own well-being and so selfish that after September the 11th, we might file a lawsuit or two. [*Laughter*] But that's about all we would do.

No, they learned something about America and our character. They learned that not only do we have a fabulous military; they're learning firsthand, when we say something, we mean it. And when I say, "If you harbor a terrorist, you're just as guilty as the terrorists," I mean it.

And the Taliban knows what we mean. The Taliban, one of the most barbaric group of people that modern history has seen, found out that the United States sticks by its words. I want you to tell your kids this about us, that we went into that country not to conquer anybody but to liberate—that's why we went—and that for the first time, many young girls go to school, thanks to the United States and our friends and allies. No, by kicking out the Taliban, we recognized that each person has worth, that each person matters.

We've got work to do, and that's why I submitted a significant increase in our budget, our defense budget, the biggest increase since Ronald Reagan was the President. I did so because I wanted to send a message, loud and clear—first—and that is, anytime we cement—put our troops in harm's way, they deserve the best equipment, the best training, and the best possible pay.

And the second reason I did it is because I want to send a message to our friends and allies and to the enemy that we're not quitting. There's not a calendar on my desk that says, by such-and-such a date, this ends. That's not the way I think. That's not the way—it doesn't matter how long it takes, as far as I'm concerned, and we owe it to our children and our grandchildren to be tough and resolved and to be smart about how we conduct this war. This the kind of war where sometimes you'll see us move, and sometimes you won't. I mean, it's the kind of war where we can be just as effective cutting off their money as it is hauling them in.

And speaking about hauling them in, the United States and our coalition and friends have pulled in over a couple of thousand of them. And there's another couple of thousand that weren't quite so lucky. You'll see some action in Afghanistan, because there's still some spots where they feel like they can bunch up. But we've got some brave souls on the ground there, chasing them down. They may try to light, like they did in the Philippines. And I want to thank President Gloria Arroyo. She heard the message, "Either you're with us, or you're with the enemy," and she responded. She asked for help. We provided help, but her troops were the ones that got this guy that was running what they call Abu Sayyaf, the person who killed—kidnapped two brave Americans, the Burnhams.

We're going to make sure that Yemen continues to remain strong and is not a place where people get to light. I mean, we are—we're running a vast coalition that loves freedom. And it's going to take a while; it will. And you've also got to know that it's very important for us not to allow the world's worst leaders to develop and hold and use the world's worst weapons to blackmail us or our friends.

But we're making progress. We are, slowly but surely. And that's the kind of war this is. It's a slowly-but-surely war. We're making progress so that our—so we'll be free. See, here's how I view what happened on September the 11th. I view it as an unbelievable national tragedy. But because I know the American people so well, I know our character and our strength, out of the evil done

to American will come some good. That's what I believe. I believe that, if we remain strong and steadfast and resolved in our war against terror and terrorists, we can achieve peace.

I want you to tell your youngsters at home that my dream is peace. I want them to grow up in a peaceful world, in a peaceful society. It's not only them, but it's any child in any country, anywhere, needs to grow up in a peaceful world. And the United States can lead the world to peace. I believe we can achieve peace in parts of the world where people have given up hope on peace. That's what I believe. I believe, by leading this coalition of freedom nations, we can achieve peace. There will be some steep hills to climb. There will be some sacrifices made. But we can achieve peace.

And here at home, we can achieve a better society. The good that can come out of the evil done to us is good that comes when people have taken a step back and said, "What does it take to make my society, my country a better place?"

People ask me, how can they help in the war against terror? My answer is, love a neighbor like you'd like to be loved yourself. If you want to fight evil, do some good. And there are a lot of Americans who hear that call. It's not my call. They've heard that call long before I was President. Some are hearing it for the first time, but they're hearing the call—that if you want to fight evil, you do some good. It's just acts of kindness and decency which will change our country one soul at a time.

Listen, there are some pockets of despair and hopelessness and poverty and addiction in America. If one of us suffers, we all suffer. Out of the evil done to America can come some incredible good, as good, solid, decent, loving Americans decide to mentor a child, to teach a child to read, for example, or to go to a shut-in and just simply say, "I love you" on a regular basis. "What can I do to make your day brighter?" It will happen when people understand their most important responsibility is to love their children with all their heart and all their soul.

No, this culture of service, this culture of serving something greater than yourself in life, is becoming real in America. People understand being a patriot is more than simply putting your heart and saying the Pledge of Allegiance to "one Nation under God." They also understand that being a patriot means to love somebody, to help somebody in need, to provide food where there's hunger and shelter where somebody needs a house and housing. That's what it means. That's what it means to be a patriot.

No, the enemy thought they were hitting a weak nation, but instead, they've awakened a great compassionate spirit in America. This sense of sacrifice was defined most clearly to me, and I think it will be to others who study the history of this period, was on Flight 93. Here were people flying across the country. They realized their plane was being used as a weapon. History will show that they said a prayer; they told their loved ones goodbye. One guy said, "Let's roll." They drove the plane in the ground to serve something greater than themselves. Every life in America matters.

It's this sense of service, this sense of understanding there's something greater than ourselves in life, this sense of working to make America the very best it can be allows me to say with certainty that out of the evil done to America will come incredible good, because this is the finest Nation, full of the finest people on the face of the Earth.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:54 p.m. at the Compton Arena. In his remarks, he referred to Matt Epstein, Jackson County chapter president and State board representative, Oregon Small Woodlands Association; and President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of the Philippines.

Remarks at a Reception for Senator Gordon Smith in Portland, Oregon

August 22, 2002

Thank you all very much. It's great to be back in this beautiful State. I am honored to end my day here in Oregon by urging the people of this State, the good people of this State, to send this good man, Gordon Smith, back to the United States Senate.

And I want to thank you all for helping him. I want to thank you for what you've done, and I want to thank you for what you're