

our country, and may God continue to bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:55 a.m. at Inspiration Rock. In his remarks, he referred to Dan Oltrogge and Larry Humphrey, incident commanders, Type I Southwest Area Incident Management Teams; Ron Senn, Santa Catalina District Ranger, U.S. Forest Service; Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell of Colorado; and Senator Jon Kyl of Arizona.

**Remarks Announcing the
Nomination of Governor Michael O.
Leavitt To Be Environmental
Protection Agency Administrator in
Aurora, Colorado**

August 11, 2003

The President. Good afternoon. First, I want to make a comment about some foreign policy. Today's departure of Charles Taylor from Liberia is an important step toward a better future for the Liberian people. The United States will work with the Liberian people and with the international community to achieve a lasting peace after more than a decade of turmoil and suffering.

The United States will help ECOWAS and the humanitarian relief organizations to get aid to those who need it. I appreciate the efforts of many African leaders, most especially Nigerian President Obasanjo, Ghanaian President Kufuor, South African President Mbeki, Mozambican President Chissano. Their continued leadership will be needed in the weeks and months ahead as a new government is formed and the Liberian people seek to chart a future of peace and stability.

Earlier today, I spoke in Arizona about the urgent need to safeguard America's forests from wildfire. It's one of the many environmental challenges that face our Nation. Those challenges go beyond our forests. We must also be vigilant in protecting the air and soil and waters around us.

This is the primary responsibility of our Environmental Protection Agency, and today I am pleased to introduce my nominee to lead that Agency, Governor Mike Leavitt of Utah. I appreciate so very much Jackie being here, as well as Michael, Taylor, Anne Marie, Westin, and Chase, who's not with us. The

Leavitt family is a great American family, primarily because Dixie and Anne, the mom and dad of the Governor, worked hard to make it such, and I'm honored they are here as well. Thank you all for coming.

I also appreciate the fact that the leader of the house and the senate from Utah have joined us today.

I selected Mike Leavitt because he is a trusted friend, a capable executive, and a man who understands the obligations of environmental stewardship. With the Senate's approval, Mike Leavitt will lead an Agency with 18,000 dedicated employees in offices all across our country. The work of the EPA is vital and reflects a national consensus on the importance of good stewardship.

During the last three decades, we've seen extraordinary progress in cleaning our air and protecting our land and making our water more pure. The quality of our air is far better than it was in the 1970s. Many more of our lakes and rivers are safe for fishing and swimming. Toxic emissions have declined, and we're bringing new resources and programs to reduce runoff and erosion. We're making real progress protecting endangered species and helping them recover.

Mike Leavitt will come to the EPA with a strong environmental record and a strong desire to improve on what has taken place during the last three decades. He served for over a decade as Governor of an important State. As cochair of the Western Regional Air Partnership, Governor Leavitt has been a leader in applying high standards in air quality, and he understands the importance of clear standards in every environmental policy. He respects the ability of State and local governments to meet those standards, rejects the old ways of command and control from above. He was twice reelected by the people of Utah, in part because he leads by consensus and focuses on results instead of process.

In Utah and beyond, he has gained wide respect for handling environmental issues in a spirit of openness and bipartisanship. These qualities and his experience will make Mike Leavitt a fine addition to my administration. I will count on him to continue the good work begun by former Administrator Whitman and Acting Administrator Horinko.

He will join my Cabinet with a full agenda and with my full confidence. Mike, I appreciate your willingness to serve. I thank the people of Utah as you leave office to take on this incredibly important assignment in our Nation's Capital.

[At this point, Gov. Leavitt made brief remarks.]

The President. Great job. Thank you. Thank you all. Good job, Michael.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:34 p.m. at the Marriott Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to former President Charles Taylor of Liberia; President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria; President John Agyekum Kufuor of Ghana; President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa; President Joaquim Alberto Chissano of Mozambique; Jacalyn S. Leavitt, wife of Gov. Leavitt, and their children Michael, Taylor, Anne Marie, Westin, and Chase; Martin R. Stephens, speaker, Utah State House of Representatives; and L. Alma "Al" Mansell, president, Utah State Senate. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Gov. Leavitt.

Remarks at a Bush-Cheney Dinner in Denver, Colorado

August 11, 2003

The President. Thank you all very much. I appreciate you coming. Thanks for the warm welcome. There is nothing like heading west.

I spent a little time on our ranch in Crawford, get to see more cows than I do the press corps. [Laughter] Seems like the cows are handling the heat a little better too. [Laughter]

But I want to thank you all very much for your help. I appreciate your strong support. I want to thank all those who made this fundraiser a record-setting fundraiser. I appreciate what you're doing. You're laying the foundation for what is going to be a great victory in November of '04.

I'm here to not only thank you; I'm here to tell you I'm going to need your support in energizing the grassroots of the great State of Colorado. I need your help in putting up signs. I need you to make the phone calls. I need you to mail the letters. I need you to remind people of this State—Republican,

Democrat, independent, don't care—that our message is one that is hopeful for every single citizen who lives in this State.

I'm loosening up. I'm getting ready—[laughter]—cutting a lot of cedar—[laughter]—running a lot of miles, getting ready for the contest. But the political season will come in its own time. For me, now is not the time for politics. You see, I've got a job to do. I'm staying focused on the people's business. I'm doing what you expect me to do in Washington, DC, and I'll continue to work to earn the confidence of every American by keeping this Nation secure and strong and prosperous and free.

I want to thank my friend the Governor of the great State of Colorado. He is—he's done a fabulous job as your Governor. He does what he says he's going to do, which is nice, to have somebody in public office—[laughter]—who says something and means it. And like me, he married above himself. I'm honored to be here with the First Lady of the State of Colorado as well.

I just called Laura and said that I'm fixing to go see a lot of our friends from the State of Colorado. I said, "How's—what's it like down there?" She said, "It's only 103." [Laughter] I said, "Well, if that's the case, it feels like winter here." [Laughter]

I can't tell you how great it is to be married to such a fine woman as Laura Bush. She is a great First Lady for our country.

I appreciate the two Senators from the State of Colorado. Senator Wayne Allard, who's—turns out to be my State cochair, along with working with the Governor here. He's a great Senator. And so is Ben Nighthorse Campbell. I'm going to tell you, it's important to put this man back into the United States Senate. And if you've got a little something left in the wallet after tonight—[laughter]—and looking for a good man to help, somebody who can use your help, it's Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell. He's a fine representative of the great State of Colorado, and I'm proud to call him friend.

Two members of the U.S. congressional delegation are with us. First, Bob Beauprez; Congressman Beauprez, thank you for coming. We didn't exactly landslide them last