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important, and we're funding out of Washington and funding out of the State level. But more important is, where does the money go? And that's what we're here to talk about. Congress must not fear faith-based programs that interface and save lives. They must welcome such programs. So that's what I'm here to talk about, Pastor, good public policy based upon the willingness of our citizenry to love a neighbor just like you'd like to be loved yourself.

One of my favorite pulpit stories came when a preacher was preaching. A guy, right where Congressman is sitting, he stood up and said, ''Use me, Lord. Use me.'' The man was about halfway through the sermon. He kind of ignored him. Maybe that's happened to you before, and you kind of ignore whoever is standing up yelling. Next Sunday, halfway through the sermon, same fellow pops up and says, ''Use me, Lord. Use me.'' Third Sunday, the same thing happens. So the pastor comes down, he says, ''Fine, you said, 'Use me, Lord. Use me.' '' He said, ''I'll be glad to use you. Why don't you paint and scrape all the pews.'' [*Laughter*] Next Sunday, the guy stands up and says, ''Use me, Lord, use me, but only in an advisory capacity.'' [*Laughter*]

No, no, the people here are not advisers. They're doers. People in faith-based programs all around the country just don't sit around and say, ''Here's some advice.'' They say, ''What can I do to answer a call? How can I help change my community and thereby change my country?'' And that's what you're doing.

Our Government must understand America is a hopeful and optimistic place, particularly when we apply the great strength of our country, which is the love of our citizens, to changing America, one heart, one soul, one conscience at a time.

May God bless your work, and may God continue to bless America. Thank you for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:57 a.m. at the Union Bethel AME Church. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. Thomas B. Brown, pastor, Union Bethel AME Church; Gov. Kathleen Blanco of Louisiana and her husband, Raymond ''Coach'' Blanco; Mayor C. Ray Nagin of New Orleans, LA; Archbishop Alfred C. Hughes, archdiocese of New Orleans; and Rev. Warren Taylor, pastor, First Evangelist Missionary Baptist Church.

Remarks at a Bush-Cheney Luncheon in New Orleans

January 15, 2004

Thank you all. Thank you all very much for coming. Thanks for the warm welcome. It's great to be back in the Big Easy. I've got a lot of good memories from this part of the world. [*Laughter*] Some I can share with you—[*laughter*]—and some I can't. [*Laughter*]

We love New Orleans, fabulous city. Thanks for coming. I appreciate your support. It's great to be in the State of Louisiana, the home of those Bayou Bengals, the mighty LSU Tigers. That's pretty—that was—that's awesome. [*Laughter*] It was exciting for Louisiana. I'm proud for you. I'm also glad that you didn't play the University of Texas this year. [*Laughter*] Wait a minute. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank you for what you did for Vice President Cheney and me last—that last time we were ran, in 2000. We carried Louisiana. I'll tell you what we're doing today: We're laying the foundation for what is going to be another victory in the great State of Louisiana, and we're laying the foundation for what is going to be a great national victory in November of 2004.

And I appreciate your help. I want to thank you for coming today. I want to thank you for your support. I want to thank you for your prayers. I want to thank you for what you're going to do, which is turn out that vote, find those voters and turn them to the polls.

I'm getting ready, and I'm loosening up. [*Laughter*] But politics is going to come in its own time. See, I've got a job to do. There's a lot on my agenda, on behalf of all the people of this country. As this campaign gets cranked up, you tell the people that I'm working on their behalf and I'm going to continue to work hard to earn their confidence by keeping America secure and strong and prosperous and free.

I am sorry Laura is not here. She is a fabulous First Lady. She's doing a great job. She is—she really, really, makes me proud and thankful she said yes when I said, ''Will you?''

[*Laughter*] She sends her love to all our friends here in New Orleans and some of our friends who might have snuck in from Texas.

I appreciate Boysie. I've known him for a long time. I want to thank you for your leadership, Boysie. You and Canizaro are doing a fine job. I want to thank all of you who worked hard to make this event such a successful event.

You've sent some good people from Louisiana to the Congress. I want to thank Jim McCrery for joining us today, and the next United States Senator, David Vitter.

Mr. Mayor, I know you're here. I want to thank you for coming. I appreciate the mayor of this great city. I appreciate his leadership. I appreciate his vision. I look forward to working with him to make sure New Orleans realizes its full potential, and everybody in this city has a chance to succeed.

Joey Durel is here, the city-parish president from Lafayette. I want to thank you for coming, Joey. I want to thank all the State and local officials who are here. I want to thank my friend Pat Brister, who is the chairman of the Louisiana Republican Party, for being here today.

I particularly want to say thanks to all the grassroots activists—[*applause*]—yes, there you are. The phone callers, the sign-putter-uppers, the envelope addressers—get ready. [*Laughter*] We're counting on you. We're counting on you to work those precincts. We're counting on you to work those phones. We're counting on you to go to the community centers. We're counting on you to turn out the vote.

I want you to remind the people that over the last 3 years, our Nation has acted decisively to confront great challenges. I came to this office to solve problems, not to pass them on to future Presidents and future generations. I came to seize opportunities instead of letting them slip away. My administration is meeting the tests of our time.

Terrorists declared war on the United States of America, and war is what they got. We've captured or killed many of the key leaders of the Al Qaida network, and the rest of them know we're on their trail. In Afghanistan and in Iraq, we gave ultimatums to terror regimes. Those regimes chose defiance, and those regimes are no more. Fifty million people in those two countries once lived under tyranny, and today, they live in freedom.

Three years ago, our military was not receiving the resources it needed, and morale was beginning to suffer. So we increased the defense budgets to prepare for the threats of a new era. And today, no one in the world can question the skill and the strength and the spirit of the United States military.

Three years ago, the economy was in trouble, and a recession was beginning, and then there was attacks on our country and scandals in corporate America and war—all of which affected the people's confidence. But this administration acted. We passed tough new laws to hold corporate criminals to account. And to get the economy going again, I have twice led the United States Congress to pass historic tax relief for the American people.

When Americans have more take-home pay to spend, to save, or invest, the whole economy grows, and people are more likely to find a job. And so we're returning more money to the people to help them raise their families. We're reducing taxes on dividends and capital gains to encourage investment. We're giving small businesses incentives to expand and to hire new people. With all these actions, this administration has laid the foundation for greater prosperity and more jobs across America so every single citizen has a chance to realize the American Dream.

And today, the economy is strong, and it is getting stronger. The figures for the third quarter of 2003 show that the economy grew at an annual rate of 8.2 percent, the fastest pace in nearly 20 years. Productivity is high. Business investment is rising. Housing construction is expanding. Manufacturing activity is increasing. We've added over a quarter-million new jobs in the last 5 months. The tax relief we passed is working.

Three years ago, there was a lot of talk about education reform in our Nation's Capital, and frankly, there wasn't much action. So I acted. I called for and the Congress passed the No Child Left Behind Act. With a solid bipartisan majority, we delivered the most dramatic education reforms in a generation. We've increased funding, particularly for the poor. But in return for access funding,

we're finally asking the question of school districts all across America, ''Are you teaching our children how to read and write and add and subtract?'' This administration is challenging the soft bigotry of low expectations. We believe every child can learn, and we expect every child—every school to teach so that not one single child is left behind in America.

We reorganized our Government and created the Department of Homeland Security to better safeguard ports like New Orleans' port, better safeguard our borders, and to better protect the American people. We passed trade promotion authority to open up new markets for Louisiana's farmers and ranchers and manufacturers and entrepreneurs. We passed budget agreements that have helped to maintain spending discipline in Washington, DC. And we recently completed the greatest advance in health care coverage for America's seniors since the founding of Medicare. The new Medicare bill will give older Americans the option of a prescription drug benefit and more control over their health care so that they receive the modern medical care that they deserve. On issue after issue, this administration has acted on principle, has kept its word, and has made progress for the American people.

The Congress gets a lot of credit. I enjoy working with Speaker Hastert; I enjoy working with Leader Frist—two good, honorable people who are working hard to deliver results to the American people. I enjoy working with the two Congressmen who are here today. We're working hard to change the tone in Washington. There's too much needless politics in the Nation's Capital, too much zero-sum attitude, too much backbiting. The best way to change that tone is to focus on the people's business, is to deliver results, and that's exactly what we're doing.

Those are the kind of people I've attracted to my administration, results-oriented people, good, honorable, honest people from all walks of life. I put together a fantastic administration. Our country has had no finer Vice President than Vice President Dick Cheney. My mother may have a second opinion. [*Laughter*]

In 3 years, we have done a lot. We have come far. But the work is only beginning. I have set great goals worthy of a great nation. First, America is committed to expanding the realm of freedom and peace for our own security and for the benefit of the world. And second, in our own country, we will work for a society that is prosperous and compassionate so that every citizen—every citizen—has a chance to work and to succeed and realize the great promise of this country. It is clear that the future of freedom and peace depend on the actions of America. This Nation is freedom's home and freedom's defender. We welcome this charge of history, and we are keeping it.

The war on terror continues. The enemies of freedom are not idle, and neither are we. This country will not rest; we will not tire; we will not stop until this danger to civilization is removed.

We are confronting that danger in Iraq, where all people can be certain they will never again have to fear the rule of Saddam Hussein. The Ba'athist holdouts, largely responsible for the current violence, now know there will be no return to corrupt power and privilege they once held. All Iraqis who have taken the side of freedom have taken the winning side.

We will still face terrorists who would rather go on killing the innocent than accept the rise of liberty in the Middle East. You see, they know that the advance of freedom in Iraq will be a major defeat in the cause of terror. This collection of killers is trying to shake the will of the United States of America. America will never be intimidated by a bunch of thugs and assassins.

We are aggressively striking the terrorists in Iraq, defeating them there so we do not have to face them in our own country. And other nations are helping—a lot of other nations are helping—because they understand a free Iraq, a peaceful Iraq, a free Iraq in the heart of the Middle East will make the world more secure. We're standing with the Iraqi people as they assume more of their own defense and move toward self government.

These are not easy tasks, but they are essential tasks. The United States of America will finish what we have begun, and we will win this essential victory in the war against terror.

In order to make the world more secure and peaceful, we're working to oppose proliferation all around the world. Last month, after talks with the United States and Great Britain, Libya voluntarily committed to disclose and dismantle all weapons of mass destruction programs. Leaders around the world now know weapons of mass destruction do not bring influence or prestige; they bring isolation and other unwelcome consequences. Nations who abandon the pursuit of these weapons will find an open path to better relations with the United States of America.

Our greatest security comes from the advance of human liberty because free nations do not support terror, free nations do not attack their neighbors, free nations do not threaten the world with weapons of mass terror. Americans believe that freedom is the deepest need and hope of every human heart. I believe that freedom is the future of every nation. And I know that freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to every man and woman in this world.

America also understands that unprecedented influence brings tremendous responsibilities. We have duties in this world. And when we see disease and starvation and hopeless poverty, we will not turn away. On the continent of Africa, this great Nation, this strong and compassionate land, is bringing the healing power of medicine to millions of men and women and children now suffering with AIDS. America is leading the world in this incredibly important work of human rescue.

We face challenges at home as well, and we'll be equal to those challenges. This administration will continue to promote a pro-growth, pro-entrepreneur economic agenda until anybody who wants to find a job is able to do so.

And for the sake of our health care system, we need to cut down on the frivolous lawsuits which increase the cost of medicine. People who've been harmed by a bad doc deserve their day in court, no question about it. Yet the system should not reward lawyers who are simply fishing for a rich settlement. Because frivolous lawsuits drive up the cost of health care—and they do—they affect the Federal budget. Medical liability reform is a national issue which requires a national solution. I sent up a good bill to the House, and the House passed it. The bill is stuck in the Senate. I call upon the Senate to act on behalf of the American people. Perhaps you know a Senator or two you need to contact here in Louisiana. No one—no one—and the Senate must understand this—no one has ever been healed by a frivolous lawsuit in America. We need medical liability reform now.

I have a responsibility as the President to make sure the judicial system runs well. And I've met that duty. I've nominated superb men and women for the Federal courts, people who will interpret the law, not legislate from the bench, people like Miguel Estrada. You might have heard of Miguel Estrada here in the State of Louisiana. Some Members of the United States Senate are trying to keep my nominees off the bench by blocking up-or-down votes. Every judicial nominee deserves a fair hearing and an up-or-down vote on the Senate floor. It is time for some of the Members of the United States Senate to stop playing politics with American justice.

Congress needs to get me an energy bill. This country needs a plan. We need a plan to promote energy efficiency and more conservation, a plan to develop cleaner technology, to help us explore for energy in environmentally friendly ways. But one thing is for certain: We need an energy plan to make sure that this country does not have to rely upon foreign sources of energy.

Our strong and prosperous Nation must also be a compassionate nation. I will continue to advance our agenda of what I call compassionate conservatism, which means we'll apply the best and most innovative ideas to the tasks of helping our fellow citizens in need. There are still millions of men and women who want to end their dependence on government, become independent through work. We must build on the success of welfare reform to encourage job training programs that actually work so we can bring work and dignity into the lives of more of our fellow citizens. With the help of Congress, we're working to ensure that more Americans can serve their communities and

their country through the Citizen Service Program.

Both Houses need to reach agreement on my Faith-Based Initiative, an initiative that will help support the armies of compassion—people from all faiths, Christian or Jewish or Muslim faiths, who have heard the universal call and are loving a neighbor just like they'd like to be loved themselves, people who are helping change America by caring for the homeless, mentoring children, and offering hope to the addicted. Congress must not fear the influence of faith. Congress must welcome faith-based programs to help solve the intractable problems of society.

A compassionate society must promote opportunity for all of us, including the independence and dignity that come from ownership. This administration will constantly strive to promote an ownership society in America. See, we want more people owning their own home. We have a minority homeownership gap in America. I proposed a plan to the Congress, starting with helping with the poorest of poor make a downpayment for a home, to close that gap. It's in the national interest that more people own their own home. We want people owning and managing their own healthcare accounts and their own retirement accounts. We want more people owning their own small business. This is an administration that understands, when someone owns something, he or she has a vital stake in the future of our country.

In a compassionate society, people respect one another. They respect their religions. They respect their point of view. And they take responsibility for the decisions they make. The culture of America is changing from one that has said, ''If it feels good, do it,'' and ''If you've got a problem, blame somebody else,'' to a culture in which each of us understands that we're responsible for the decisions we make in life.

If you are fortunate enough to be a mother or father, you're responsible for loving your child with all your heart. If you're concerned about the quality of the education in the community in which you live, you're responsible for doing something about it. If you're a CEO in corporate America, you're responsible for telling the truth to your shareholders and your employees. And in this new responsibility society, each of us is responsible for loving our neighbor just like we'd like to be loved ourself.

I see the culture of service and responsibility growing around us. I just met with some of the great social entrepreneurs of the State of Louisiana today, neighborhood healers, helpers, people who are actively involved in saving America, one heart and one soul and one conscience at a time. I started what's called the USA Freedom Corps. It's a chance to get people—it's an opportunity for people to extend a hand to a neighbor in need, and the response has been fantastic. Civil society in America is strong and vibrant. Our charities are strong. Churches and synagogues and mosques are strong. Policemen and firefighters and people who wear our Nation's uniform remind us what it means to sacrifice for something greater than yourself. Once again, the children of America believe in heroes because they see them every day.

In these challenging times, the world has seen the resolve and the courage of America. I've been privileged to see the compassion and the character of the American people. All the tests of the last 3 years have come to the right nation. We're a strong country, and we use that strength to defend the peace. We're an optimistic country, confident in ourselves and in ideals bigger than ourselves. Abroad, we seek to lift whole nations by spreading freedom. At home, we seek to lift up lives by spreading opportunity to every corner of America. This is the work that history has set before us. We welcome it and know for our country, the best days lie ahead.

May God bless you all. Thank you all. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:06 p.m. at the National D-Day Museum. In his remarks, he referred to Donald ''Boysie'' Bollinger and Joe Canizaro, Louisiana State finance cochairmen, Bush-Cheney '04, Inc.; Mayor C. Ray Nagin of New Orleans, LA; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and Miguel A. Estrada, whose nomination to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit was withdrawn on September 4, 2003.

Proclamation 7751—Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday, 2004

January 15, 2004

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

On the Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday, our Nation honors an American who dedicated his life to the fundamental principles of freedom, opportunity, and equal justice for all. Today, all Americans benefit from Dr. King's work and his legacy of courage, dignity, and moral clarity.

Forty years ago this past August, on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, Dr. King spoke passionately of his dream for America. He dreamed of an America where all citizens would be judged by the content of their character and not by the color of their skin. He dreamed of an America where all would enjoy the riches of freedom and the security of justice. He dreamed of an America where the doors of opportunity would be open to all of God's children.

Dr. King's leadership moved Americans to examine our hearts—to reject what he called the "tranquilizing drug of gradualism" on the path to racial justice—and to live up to the ideals of our Constitution and Declaration of Independence. America has come far in realizing Dr. King's dream, but there is still work to be done. In remembering Dr. King's vision and life of service, we renew our commitment to guaranteeing the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for all Americans.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Monday, January 19, 2004, as the Martin Luther King, Jr., Federal Holiday. I encourage all Americans to observe this day with appropriate activities and programs that honor the memory and legacy of Dr. King.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:38 a.m., January 16, 2004]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on January 20.

Memorandum on Designation of the State of Kuwait as a Major Non-NATO Ally

January 15, 2004

Presidential Determination No. 2004–21

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Designation of the State of Kuwait as a Major Non-NATO Ally

Consistent with the authority vested in me by section 517 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (the "Act"), I hereby designate the State of Kuwait as a Major Non-NATO Ally of the United States for the purposes of the Act and the Arms Export Control Act.

You are authorized and directed to publish this determination in the *Federal Register*.

George W. Bush

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Requesting Emergency Funding for the Department of the Interior's National Park Service

January 15, 2004

Dear Mr. Speaker:

In accordance with provisions of the "1997 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Recovery from Natural Disasters, and for Overseas Peacekeeping Efforts, Including those in Bosnia" (Public Law 105–18), I hereby request and make available $22.5 million in emergency funding for the Department of the Interior's National Park Service.

These funds would allow for the repair and replacement of concession facilities at Yosemite National Park that were damaged in a 1997 flood.