

Remarks at a Bush-Cheney Luncheon in Santa Clara, California

March 4, 2004

Thanks a lot. Thanks for coming. Thanks for the warm welcome. It is great to be back. I appreciate it. Thanks. Be seated, please. Thanks for the warm welcome. It is great to be back in Santa Clara. Such a beautiful part of our country, isn't it? It's a wonderful day.

I have had a great trip here to California. I was in Los Angeles yesterday and Bakersfield this morning. I don't know if you know that, but in 1949 we called that home. I was quick to remind the people in Bakersfield I'd called it home. [*Laughter*]

Had a chance to spend some quality time with your Governor yesterday. I know you were a little disappointed, like I was, that "Terminator 3" didn't win any Oscars. [*Laughter*] But Arnold has had a pretty good year. By electing Governor Schwarzenegger, the voters of California have shown that no party can take California for granted.

The Vice President and I are going to be spending some quality time here this coming year. With your continued help, California is going to be an important part of a nationwide victory in November 2004. Speaking about the Vice President, I made a really good pick when I asked Dick Cheney to serve by my side. He is a fabulous Vice President for our country. Mother may have a second opinion. [*Laughter*]

I'm sorry Laura is not with me. She is in Texas. She was visiting her mother in Midland, Texas, where both of us were raised. She's on her way to Crawford. After I give this speech, I'm on my way to Crawford. She sends her best greetings to our friends here in the Bay Area. I tell you, Laura is a great First Lady. I'm a fortunate man that she is—agreed to marry me, and I love her dearly.

I want to thank Brad for his friendship and leadership here in the State of California, and my friend Gerry Parsky, who is the State campaign chairman. I too want to thank Katie Boyd and Gregory Slayton for their hard work, and thank my friend Mercer Reynolds from Cincinnati, Ohio, who is the national finance chairman of Bush-Cheney

'04—good people working hard to make sure that we're well-funded. And we will be.

I appreciate Bill Jones, the next United States Senator from the State of California, with us today. The next United States Senator from the State of South Dakota is with us today, Congressman John Thune. Thank you for coming, John.

I want to thank all the grassroots activists who are here, the people who are going to make the phone calls and put up the signs and turn out the vote. I want to thank you in advance for what you're going to do. It's important.

Last Tuesday night I placed a call to Senator Kerry. I told him I was looking forward to a spirited campaign, and I congratulated him on his victory. It's going to be an interesting debate on the issues. My opponent has spent two decades in Washington, and he's built up quite a record. In fact, Senator Kerry has been in Washington long enough to take both sides on just about every issue. [*Laughter*]

Voters have a clear choice between keeping the tax relief that is moving this economy forward or putting the burden of higher taxes back on the American people. They have a clear choice between an America that leads the world with strength and confidence or an America that is uncertain in the face of danger.

I look forward to setting these alternatives squarely before the American people. I look forward to this campaign. We have a great record. We've achieved a lot during the last 3 years. And most important, we have a positive vision for the years ahead, a positive vision for winning the war against terror and extending peace and freedom throughout the world, a positive vision for creating jobs and promoting opportunity and compassion here at home. I will leave no doubt where I stand. We look forward to winning on the 2nd of November.

The last 3 years have brought serious challenges, and we have given serious answers. We came to office with the stock market in decline and an economy headed into recession, delivered historic tax relief, and now our economy is the fastest growing of any major industrialized nation.

We had to confront corporate crimes that cost people their jobs and their savings, so we passed strong corporate reforms and made it abundantly clear that we will not tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of America.

We saw war and grief arrive on a quiet September morning, so we pursued the terrorist enemy across the world, captured or killed many of the key leaders of the Al Qaeda network. And the rest of them will learn there is no cave or hole deep enough to hide from American justice.

We confronted the dangers of state-sponsored terror and the spread of weapons of mass destruction, so we ended two of the most violent and dangerous regimes on Earth. We freed over 50 million people. And once again, America is proud to lead the armies of liberation.

When Dick Cheney and I came to Washington, we found a military that was underfunded and underappreciated, so we gave our military the resources and respect they deserve. And today, no one can question the skill and the strength and the spirit of the United States military.

We came to office, and people in Washington were used to gridlock, and old problems were used to score points. Old problems were politicized and debated and then just passed on from year to year. But we came for a purpose. We came to get some things done for the people. We passed major reforms to raise the standards in public schools. We passed reforms for Medicare to give prescription drugs and choices to senior citizens. We chose to lead, and we produced results for the American people.

It is the President's job to confront problems, not to pass them on to future Presidents and future generations. A President needs to step up and make the hard decisions and keep his commitments, and that is how I will continue to lead our country.

Great events will turn on this election. The man who sits in the Oval Office will set the course of the war on terror and the direction of our economy. The security and prosperity of America are at stake. My opponent has not offered much in the way of strategies to win the war or policies to expand our economy. So far all we hear from that side is a

lot of old bitterness and partisan anger. Anger is not an agenda for the future of America. We're taking on the big issues with optimism and resolve and determination. I stand ready to lead this Nation for 4 more years.

The big issue for every family in America is the Federal tax burden. With the largest tax relief since Ronald Reagan was President, we have left more money in the hands that earned it. By spending and investing and helping to create new jobs, the American people have used their money far better than the Government would have.

Because we acted, our economy is growing stronger. The economy grew in the second half of 2003 at one of the fastest rates in nearly 20 years. Productivity is high. Business investment is rising. Interest rates and inflation are low. Homeownership is at the highest rate ever. Manufacturing is increasing. We've added 366,000 new jobs over the past 5 months. The tax relief we passed is working.

My opponent has plans for those tax cuts. He wants to take them away. He would use that money to expand the Federal Government. I have a better idea: To keep this economy growing and to create jobs, the tax cuts must be permanent.

We must do more to keep the economy growing. We need to maintain fiscal discipline in our Nation's Capital. We need to protect businessowners and employees from frivolous lawsuits and needless regulation. We need to control the health—the cost of health care by passing medical liability reform at the national level. We need to open up markets for California's entrepreneurs and farmers and ranchers and manufacturers. We need to pass sound energy legislation to modernize the electricity system and to make America less dependent on foreign sources of energy. My opponent has talked about job creation, but he's against every one of these job-creating measures. Empty talk about jobs and economic isolationism won't get anyone hired.

This economy of ours is going through a time of change and challenge. We're helping people to gain the skills and the security to make a good living and to look forward to

a good retirement. All skills start with education. I worked with Congress to pass a really good piece of legislation, the No Child Left Behind Act. This good law is challenging the soft bigotry of low expectations. In return for increased Federal dollars, particularly for Title I students, we demanded that every public school in America show us whether or not each child is learning to read and write and add and subtract. We have done so because we refuse to accept mediocrity. We expect the best so that not one single child is left behind in America.

We're doing more. We have plans to help high school students who fall behind in reading and math. We've got a sound strategy to help our community colleges to train workers for the industries that are creating the new jobs for our economy. Education is the gateway to a hopeful future; this administration understands the gate must be open to all Americans.

We're also working to promote an ownership society in America in which more people own their own homes and build their own savings. We want more people owning their own small businesses. We want people to own and manage their own health care plans. We want younger workers to own and manage their own retirement under Social Security. When people have solid assets, this administration understands they gain independence and security and dignity. I believe in private property so much, I want everybody to have some.

On issue after issue, the American people have a clear choice. My opponent is against personal retirement accounts, against putting patients in charge of Medicare, and against tax relief. He seems to be against every idea that gives Americans more authority and more choices and more control over their own lives. The same old Washington mindset: They'll give the orders, and you'll pay the bills. I've got news for the Washington crowd. America has gone beyond that way of thinking, and we're not going back. The policy that this administration is promoting trusts the people of America, to trust the people to make the best decisions with their own money, to trust the people to manage their own health care and their own retirement and their own lives.

Our future also depends on America's leadership in this world. The momentum of freedom in our time is strong, but we still face serious challenges. Al Qaida is wounded but not broken. Terrorists are testing our will in Afghanistan and Iraq. Regimes in North Korea and Iran are challenging the peace. If America shows weakness and uncertainty in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. That is not going to happen on my watch.

This Nation is strong and confident in the cause of freedom. No friend or enemy today doubts the word of America. America and our allies gave an ultimatum to the terror regime in Afghanistan. The Taliban chose defiance. The Taliban are no longer in power. America and our allies gave an ultimatum to the terror regime in Iraq. The dictator chose defiance. Now the dictator sits in a prison cell.

September the 11th, 2001, taught a lesson I have not forgotten. America must confront threats before they fully materialize. In Iraq, my administration looked at the intelligence information, and we saw a threat. The Congress looked at the intelligence information, and they saw a threat. The United Nations Security Council looked at the intelligence information, and it saw a threat. The previous administration and Congress looked at the intelligence and made regime change in Iraq the policy of our country. In 2002, the U.N. Security Council yet again demanded a full accounting of Saddam Hussein's weapons programs. As he had for over a decade, Saddam Hussein refused to comply. So I had a choice to make, either to take the word of a madman or take action to defend America. Faced with that choice, I will defend our country every time.

My opponent admits that Saddam Hussein was a threat. He just didn't support my decision to remove Saddam from power. Perhaps he was hoping Saddam would lose the next Iraqi election. [Laughter] We showed the dictator and a watching world that America means what it says.

Because our coalition acted, Saddam's torture chambers are closed. Because we acted, Iraq's weapons programs are ended forever. Because we acted, nations like Libya have gotten the message and renounced their own

weapons programs. Because we acted, an example of democracy is rising at the very heart of the Middle East. Because we acted, the world is more free, and America is more secure.

We still face thugs and terrorists in Iraq who would rather go on killing the innocent than accept the advance of liberty. They know that a free Iraq will be a major defeat in the cause of terror. This collection of killers is trying to shake our will. They don't understand America. America will never be intimidated by thugs or assassins.

We're aggressively striking the terrorists in Iraq, defeating them there so we won't have to face them in our own country. We're calling on other nations to help Iraq to build a free society, which will make the whole world more peaceful and secure. We're standing with the Iraqi people as they assume more of their own defense and move toward self-government. These aren't easy tasks, but they're essential tasks. We'll finish what we have begun. We will win this essential victory in the war on terror.

On national security, Americans have the clearest possible choice. My opponent says he approves of bold action in the world, but only if other countries don't object. I'm all for united action, and so are the 34 coalition partners we have in Iraq right now. Yet America must never outsource America's national security decisions to leaders of other countries.

Some are skeptical that the war on terror is really a war at all. Here's what my opponent said. He said the war on terror is far less of a military operation and far more of an intelligence-gathering, law enforcement operation. I disagree. Our Nation followed this approach after the World Trade Center was bombed in 1993. The matter was handled in the courts and thought by some to be settled. But the terrorists were still training in Afghanistan. They were still plotting in other nations. They were drawing up more ambitious plans. After the chaos and carnage of September the 11th, it's not enough to serve our enemies with legal papers. With those attacks, the terrorists and their supporters declared war on the United States of America, and war is what they got.

At bases across our country and the world, I have had the privilege, the high privilege of meeting with the men and women of our military who are defending our country and sacrificing for our security. I've seen their great decency and unselfish courage. I can assure you, ladies and gentlemen, the cause of freedom is in good hands.

The Nation is prosperous and strong. Yet we need to remember that our greatest strength is in the hearts and souls of our citizens. We're strong because of the values we try to live by, courage, compassion, reverence, and integrity. We're strong because of the institutions that help give us direction and purpose, families and schools and religious congregations.

These values and institutions are fundamental to our lives, and they deserve the respect of our Government. We stand for the fair treatment of faith-based groups so they can receive Federal support for their works of compassion and healing. We will not stand for Government discrimination against people of faith.

We stand for welfare reforms that require work and strengthen marriage, which have helped millions of Americans find independence and dignity. We will not stand for any attempt to weaken those reforms and to send people back into lives of dependence. We stand for a culture of life in which every person counts and every person matters. We will not stand for the treatment of any life as a commodity to be experimented upon or exploited or cloned. We stand for the confirmation of judges who strictly and faithfully interpret the law. We will not stand for judges who undermine democracy by legislating from the bench or try to remake the culture of America by court order.

We stand for a culture of responsibility in America. We're changing the culture of this country 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 we're responsible for the decisions we make in life. If you're fortunate enough to be a mother or father, you're responsible for loving your child with all your heart. If you're worried 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 have the responsibility to tell the truth to your shareholders and your employees. And in the responsibility society, each of us is responsible for loving our neighbor just like we'd like to be loved ourself.

For all Americans, these years in our history will always stand apart. There are quiet times in the life of a nation, when little is expected of the leaders. This is not one of those times. You and I are living in a period when the stakes are high, the challenge is difficult, and resolve is needed. None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began.

On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. I'll never forget that day. I remember the workers and the hardhats who were shouting, "Whatever it takes." I remember the guy who pointed his finger at me and said, "Don't let me down." As we all did that day, these men and women searching through the rubble took it personally. I took it personally. I have a responsibility that goes on. I will never relent in bringing justice to our enemies. I will defend our country, whatever it takes.

In these times, I've also been a witness to the character of this Nation. Not so long ago, some had their doubts about the American character, about our capacity to meet serious challenges or to serve a cause greater than self-interest. But Americans have given their answer. I've seen the unselfish courage of our troops. I've seen the heroism of Americans in the face of danger. I've seen the spirit of service and compassion renewed in our country. We've all seen our Nation unite in common purpose when it mattered most.

We'll need all these qualities for the work ahead. We have a war to win, and the world is counting on us to lead the cause of freedom and peace. We have a duty to spread opportunity and hope to every part of America. This is the work that history has set before us. We welcome it. And we know that for our country, the best days lie ahead.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1 p.m. at the Santa Clara Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger of California; Brad Freeman, California State finance chairman, Gerald L. Parsky, California State

chairman, and Mercer Reynolds, national finance chairman, Bush-Cheney '04, Inc.; Bill Jones, Republican candidate for California Senator; and former Representative John R. Thune, Republican candidate for South Dakota Senator.

**Message to the Congress
Transmitting a Proposed Protocol
Amending the Indonesia-U.S.
Agreement Concerning Nuclear
Energy**

March 4, 2004

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit to the Congress, consistent with sections 123 b. and 123 d. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2153(b), (d)) (the "Act"), the text of a proposed Protocol Amending the Agreement for Cooperation Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Indonesia Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy, signed at Washington on June 30, 1980. I also transmit my written approval, authorization, and determination concerning the Protocol, and an unclassified Nuclear Proliferation Assessment Statement (NPAS) concerning the Protocol. (Consistent with section 123 of the Act, as amended by title XII of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-277), a classified Annex to the NPAS, prepared by the Secretary of State in consultation with the Director of Central Intelligence, summarizing relevant classified information, will be submitted to the Congress separately.) The joint memorandum submitted to me by the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Energy and a letter from the Chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission stating the views of the Commission are also enclosed.

I am advised that the proposed Protocol has been negotiated consistent with the Act and other applicable law and that it meets all statutory requirements. This Protocol will advance the nonproliferation and other foreign policy interests of the United States.

The Protocol amends the Agreement for Cooperation Between the Government of