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the word "achieve." In other words, we expect results. If you don't measure, if you don't get—if you don't ask for results, it is likely you won't get results or at least you won't know. How do you know—tell your friends, how can you possibly know whether or not a child can read unless you're willing to measure?

Secondly, tell your friends that when we find—in the No Child Left Behind Act, early on when we discover that a child doesn't have the tools necessary to read, he or she gets extra help. Third, that if a school perpetually fails, parents get different options in order to make sure that people respond to the moms and dads and to the needs of the children.

We've got a really good record on public education. And the No Child Left Behind Act is a strong piece of legislation which I believe will make the public school systems work better, not worse.

What else? Yes, sir.

Support for the President

Q. I don't have a question, sir. I just wanted to thank you. I served in the United States Air Force for 10 years. I just love the love that you have for our troops and admiration you have for our troops, and I salute you.

The President. Thank you, sir.

Q. ——and the First Lady as well.

The President. Thank you. I appreciate that. Thanks for saying that.

I'm a fellow who knows a good exit line. [*Laughter*] We're getting on the bus and heading up the road. I want to thank you all for coming. I hope you've enjoyed this as much as I have. I'm glad to get out of the Nation's Capital and come and be with you all. I've really enjoyed our dialog and our discussion. I hope you can tell I have a reason why I want to be your President for 4 more years. I hope you can tell I'm counting on you to go to your neighbors and let them know I have a reason. And I hope you can tell I'm incredibly optimistic and hopeful about the future of this country, because I understand the strength of this country is the people who live in America.

May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless our country. Thanks for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 1:40 p.m. at Cabela's Distribution Center. In his remarks, he referred to Richard N. Cabela, chairman and director, Cabela's Inc., and his wife, Mary; Wisconsin State Representatives Stephen J. Freese and Gabe Loeffelholz; Mayor Jerry Wehrle of Lancaster, WI; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Muqtada Al Sadr, Iraqi Shiite cleric whose militia engaged in an uprising in Iraq in early April; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady, who introduced the President. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks in LaCrosse, Wisconsin

May 7, 2004

The President. Thank you all very much. Thanks for coming. It's a great turnout. Laura and I are so honored so many came out to say hello here in the great State of Wisconsin. I'm glad to be back in LaCrosse. What a fine city, full of fine, fine people.

Listen, traveling your State on the bus is a fantastic experience, particularly for two people who grew up in the desert. [*Laughter*] As Laura said, people lined the road and were really friendly. We had a stop at the Kuhle family farm. That's between Hazel Green and Cuba City. It gave us a chance to shake hands with some hard-working people just like you all. A guy asked me if I wanted to milk his cows. I said, "I think we better get back on the bus." [*Laughter*] Had a little Culver's ice cream on the way here too, I want you to know.

I came here to ask for your vote. I came here to tell you I've got a reason to be President for 4 more years. I want this country to be safer and stronger and better, and working together, we can make it that way.

I also came here to ask for your help. I want you to feel so inspired to put up the signs and knock on your neighbors' doors and go to community centers and your houses of worship and encourage people to vote. Tell them to go to the polls, and tell them when you're—when you're telling them how to vote or suggesting to them how to vote—[*laughter*]—remind them that we have a positive vision, an optimistic vision, a hopeful

vision for every single American who lives in this country.

If you can't figure out what else to say, tell them they need to put me back in so that Laura can be the First Lady for 4 more years. I'm really proud of Laura. She's been a fantastic First Lady. She's a great wife and wonderful mom. She is—I'm a really lucky guy—[*laughter*]—and I think the people of America are lucky to have her as the First Lady.

I put together a fantastic team of people to serve this country, people from all walks of life, people from different backgrounds, people like Tommy Thompson of the State of Wisconsin. By the way, Tommy is doing a great job. He's got a tough job, but he's doing a great job. He helped us reform Medicare so we keep the promise to the seniors of America. Tommy—you trained him well here in Wisconsin.

I'm also running with a really fine man. Vice President Dick Cheney is a great Vice President.

I want to thank Dan Kapanke, the—one of the co-owners of the baseball team that plays here. I appreciate you opening up your field. It's nice to be here in "the Lumber Yard." It's a beautiful stadium. You know I'm a baseball fan. I love baseball. It's a perfect setting for us to talk about how to make sure our country is the best it can possibly be. So thanks for opening up "the Lumber Yard" to a bunch of tall timber. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Congressman Mark Green and Congressman Paul Ryan, two fine Members of the United States House of Representatives.

I know the State treasurer Jack Voight is with us today, and I'm proud that the treasurer has come. I appreciate Mary Panzer and John Gard, two members of the statehouse who have joined us today, the leader in the senate and the speaker. And I want to thank all the members of the statehouse who are here. I particularly want to thank State Senator Dale Schultz, the next Congressman from this district.

We've even got them coming in from Milwaukee today. Scott Walker, who is the Milwaukee County Executive, has joined us. And I'm proud that Scott is here. Thank you for coming, Scott.

And I want to thank Rick Graber, the party chairman for the State.

I want to thank all the grassroots activists who are here, people who do the hard work at turning out the vote.

I appreciate my friend Larry Gatlin, who is here today. Larry is a great friend of Laura of me. Have you sung yet? Good. Gatlin and I both grew up in west Texas, so when he sees trees and water, he's somewhat taken aback. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank all the military personnel who are with us today. Thank you for serving this country.

Audience members. U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

The President. When you're out rounding up the vote, remind the people that you talk to that this administration and our country has faced serious challenges in the last 3 years, and we have given serious answers. We came to office with a stock market in decline and an economy headed into a recession, but we acted. We delivered historic tax relief, and now our economy is the fastest growing of any major industrialized nation.

We uncovered corporate crimes that cost people their jobs and their savings. We passed strong corporate reforms. Wrongdoers are being brought to account. And we have made it clear we will not tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of America.

We saw war and grief arrive on a quiet September morning. We pursued the terrorist enemy across the world. We've captured or killed many key leaders of the Al Qaida network. And the rest will learn this about America: There is no cave or hole deep enough to hide from American justice.

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 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 have liberated over 50 million people. Once again, America is proud to stand against tyranny and to set nations free.

It is the President's job to confront problems, not to pass them on to future Presidents and future generations. The President needs to speak clearly, mean what he says, to step up and make the hard decisions. 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.

We've got a tough race ahead of us, and that's why I'm glad so many came out. That's why I'm glad you gave me a chance to ask for your help. It's going to be a hard campaign, and I'm looking forward to it. I'm looking forward to the challenge. I'm looking forward to the opportunity to do what we have done today and explain to the American people why I'm running and what I intend to do. Yes, we've done a lot in the past, but there is more to do to make this country a better place and a safer place and a stronger place.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. We should not take my opponent lightly. He is an experienced United States Senator. He has built up quite a record. In fact, he's been in Washington long enough to take both sides on just about every issue. [*Laughter*] He voted for the PATRIOT Act, for NAFTA, for No Child Left Behind, and for the use of force of Iraq. Now he opposes the PATRIOT Act, NAFTA, No Child Left Behind, and the liberation of Iraq. His positions on these issues remind me of a saying we have in Texas: If you don't like the weather, just wait a few minutes and it will change.

Now, we're both going to spend a lot of time in this State. I've been here today picking up the endorsements of the hard-working people of Wisconsin. I've been here—out there talking to as many people as I can to let them know I have a desire to serve this country for 4 more years. As you might remember, he claims to have picked up some important endorsements among foreign leaders. The problem is, he won't give us their names. [*Laughter*]

Now, he did say the other day on national TV, "What I said is true. I mean, you can go to New York City, and you can be in a restaurant, and you can meet a foreign leader." [*Laughter*] I think this whole thing is a case of mistaken identity. [*Laughter*] I mean, just because somebody has an accent and a suit and a nice table at a New York restaurant doesn't make him a foreign leader.

But no matter who these mystery people are, they're not going to decide the election. The American people will be deciding this election, and there will be a clear choice—a clear choice, the choice between keeping the tax relief that is moving this economy forward or putting the burden of higher taxes back on the American people. It is a choice between an America that leads the world with strength and confidence or an America that is uncertain in the face of danger.

The other side hasn't offered much in the way of strategies and plans to win the war on terror or to expand prosperity throughout our country. As a matter of fact, all we hear is bitterness and old partisan anger. But they're going to find out right quick that anger is not an agenda for the future of America. I look forward to taking on the big issues, the issues that matter, with optimism and resolve and determination. And I will make it clear that I stand ready to lead this country for 4 more years.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

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

This economy of ours is strong, and it is getting stronger. The economy grew at a rate of 4.2 percent in the first quarter. Economic growth over the past three quarters has been the fastest in nearly two decades. Manufacturing activity is increasing. Business investment is rising. Disposable income is up. Inflation is low. Mortgage rates are low. Homeownership rate amongst Americans is the highest ever. This farm economy is strong.

America has had 4 straight years of rising exports. Last year, we had the highest farm income on record.

This morning, we got some more good news. Last month, America added 288,000 new jobs. Our people are going back to work. We've added 1.1 million jobs since last August. The unemployment rate in this State is 5.1 percent, down from 5.8 percent last summer. The tax relief we passed is working.

There is a difference of opinion about tax relief in this campaign. When you're out garnering the vote, remind people about the stands that I have taken and the stands my opponent has taken. See, on every one of the tax relief plans we passed the last 3 years, he voted against them. He voted against increasing the child credit, for reducing the marriage penalty, for creating a 10-percent lower bracket, for business investment breaks to small businesses.

And also remind them that when it comes to tax increases, it's been a lot easier to get a yes vote out of him. These are the facts. Since he's been representing the people of Massachusetts, he voted for taxes 350 times. He's not afraid to raise the taxes on the people. And that matters because, in a campaign, the tendency is for people to make promises. We're counting up the promises. He has so far promised $1.9 trillion of spending, and we're just getting started. And there's 6 months more to go. [*Laughter*]

And the question you've got to ask of the Senator is, "How are you going to pay for it?" He said, "by taxing the rich." But the problem is, you can't raise enough money by taxing the rich to pay for $1.9 trillion of new money. So he has a tax gap, and given his record, you know who's going to have to pay that tax gap. That's you, but we're not going to let him have the chance to do so.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Raising taxes on the American people would wreck this economic growth and destroy job creation. No, what we need to do is to make sure this administration stays in office so we can keep taxes low and not raise taxes on the hard-working people of this country.

And there's more we've got to do. I'll continue to bring fiscal discipline to Washington, DC, by reminding the people over there whose money they spend. In Washington, we don't spend the Government's money. We spend your money, and we have an obligation to be wise about how we spend your money.

In order to make sure this economy continues to grow, we need an energy policy in America. We need a policy that encourages conservation. But we need a policy, also, that encourages alternative sources of energy. We ought to be using more corn and soybean to produce ethanol and biodiesel. We need clean coal technology. We ought to be spreading safe nuclear power. We ought to be exploring for natural gas in environmentally friendly ways. We need an energy policy to become less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

We need association health care plans and tax-free health savings accounts to help control the cost of medicine so people will be able to find work. We need medical liability reform in Washington, DC, so that the frivolous lawsuits don't keep running up the cost of medicine and driving docs out of business.

We need to be confident when it comes to trade policy. Listen, other Presidents before me have opened up U.S. markets for the good of consumers. When you get more products coming into America, consumers get better choices at better prices and better quality. What we need to do is reject economic isolationism and say to other nations, "Treat us the way we treat you. Open up your markets." Create a level playing field for America's workers and farmers and manufacturers, and we can compete with anybody, anyplace, anywhere on the face of the Earth.

No, I'm running because I want to make sure this economic growth continues. I'm running to make sure America is the greatest economy on the face of the Earth. I'm running because I want our people with good, solid jobs. I'm running to promote a pro-entrepreneur, pro-small-business, pro-growth economic agenda.

America—our future, the future of this country also depends on our leadership in the world. The momentum of freedom in our time is strong, but we still face serious dangers. We're still at war. 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. This will not happen on my watch.

This Nation is strong and confident in the cause of freedom. And today, nobody, no one, friend or enemy, doubts the word of the United States of America. America and our allies gave an ultimatum to the terror regime in Afghanistan. The Taliban chose defiance, and the Taliban are no longer in power. America and our allies gave an ultimatum to the terror regime in Iraq. The dictator chose defiance, and today, the dictator sits in a prison cell.

September the 11th, 2001, taught a lesson I will never forget and the country must never forget. America must confront threats before they fully materialize. In Iraq, my administration looked at the intelligence, and we saw a threat. I want to remind you that the United States Congress looked at the intelligence, and they saw a threat. The United Nations Security Council looked at the intelligence, and it saw a threat.

In 2002, the U.N. Security Council yet again demanded a full accounting of Saddam Hussein's weapons programs, and the reason why they did, again—because they remembered the history. Not only did they see a threat, they remembered the actions he had taken. He had attacked countries in his neighborhood. He had used weapons of mass destruction against people in other countries as well as people in his own country. He had ties to terrorism. He paid suiciders to go in and kill innocent Israelis. No, we remembered the nature of the man. Saddam Hussein, as he had for over a decade, refused to comply with the demands of the free world. And so I had a choice to make: Either trust the word of a madman, or defend America. And given that choice, I will defend America every time.

My opponent admits that Saddam Hussein was a threat. He just didn't support my decision to remove Saddam from power. Maybe 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. And that's really important to keep the peace. 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 have voluntarily disarmed. Because we acted, an example of democracy is rising in the heart of the Middle East. Because we acted, the world is more free. Because we acted, America is more secure.

It's been tough days in Iraq for the American people, especially those families with soldiers overseas and those families of a loved one who has sacrificed for our freedom and security—tough work. And there's a reason why. There are foreign fighters and remnants of the old tyrant who can't stand the thought of freedom taking hold in Iraq. That's what we're seeing. Freedom scares terrorists. Freedom scares people who hate. Freedom scares people with no conscience.

What they're trying to do is they're trying to shake our will. They want us to leave. They want us to show weakness. They do not understand America, and they do not understand this President. No thug or assassin will intimidate America. We will finish the work that we have begun, for our own security. We will finish the work we have begun, for peace and freedom. Free societies do not attack their neighbors. Free societies do not breed hate. Free societies provide hope, so that moms and dads can raise their children in a peaceful world, so their children can aspire what we want our children to aspire to, a good education and a hopeful life.

No, these are historic times. These are times that require strong will and strong determination. These are times in which we could literally change the world by the spread of freedom. Freedom is not America's gift to the world. Freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world. We will finish what we have begun, and 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 do not object. Now, I'm for working with other countries. I've put together coalitions to fight the war on terror—the coalition in Afghanistan. There's over 30 nations working with us in Iraq right

now, because they understand what I understand: A free Iraq will make the world more secure; a free Iraq will change the Middle East for the better. But let me tell you this as clearly as I can. I will never turn over America's national security decisions to leaders of other countries.

And we have a difference of opinion about whether the war on terror is really a war at all. My opponent says the war on terror is far less of a military operation and far more of an intelligence-gathering, law enforcement operation. I disagree—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 still drawing up more ambitious plans.

After the carnage and chaos of September the 11th, it is 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.

And winning the war on terror requires that we use all our assets, including a fantastic military. And as we use that military, our troops must be given the best equipment in the world. That is why I went to Congress and asked for an $87 billion appropriation last fall to help our troops. I want to thank the two Congressmen for supporting that supplemental. But my opponent chose to vote "no," and here's what he said. He said, "I actually did vote for the 87 billion, before I voted against it." [*Laughter*]

The American President must speak clearly. The American President must mean what he says. And when I say the troops will get the support they need, I mean that the troops will get the support they need to win this war on terror.

Our men and women in the military are taking great risks, and they're doing great work. Like you, I was disgusted about the pictures I saw on TV, about the humiliation given to the prisoners in Iraq. No American can stand for that. That doesn't reflect us, nor does it reflect the character and the decency and the honor of the men and women who wear the uniform of the United States of America. I have seen their decency, and I have seen their unselfish courage. And I assure you, ladies and gentlemen, the cause of freedom is in really good hands.

This Nation is prosperous and strong. Yet, we need to remember that our greatest strength is in the hearts and souls of our fellow citizens. We're strong because of the values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. We're strong because of the institutions that help give us direction and purpose, families and schools and our religious congregations. These values and institutions are fundamental to our lives, and they deserve the respect of the 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 judges who try to remake the values of America by court order.

We stand for a culture of responsibility in America. The culture of this country is changing from one that has said "If it feels good, just go ahead and do it," and "If you've got a problem, blame somebody else," to a culture in which each of us understands we are responsible for the decisions we make in life.

If you're a mom or a dad—if you're lucky enough to be a mom or a dad, 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 are responsible for telling the truth to your shareholders and your employees. And in this new responsibility society, each of us—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 its leaders. This isn't one of those times. You and I are living in a period when the stakes are high, the challenges are difficult, a time when firm, firm 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. There were policemen and firefighters shouting, "Whatever it takes, Mr. President. Whatever it takes." A guy in a hardhat pointed at me and said, "Do not 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 the security of America, whatever it takes.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

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

We will need all of these qualities for the work ahead. See, we've got work to do. We've got a job. We must win the war on terror, and the world is counting on America to continue to lead the cause of freedom and peace.

We have work to do. We must spread opportunity to every part of the country. We must work together over the next 4 years to make America a safer place, a stronger place, and a better place for every citizen.

This is the work that history has set before us. We welcome it, and we know that for our great country, the best days lie ahead.

May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless our country. Thank you for coming. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:25 p.m. at Copeland Park. In his remarks, he referred to Dan Kapanke, owner, Lacrosse Loggers baseball team and candidate for Wisconsin State Senate; State Senator Mary Panzer and State Representative John Gard of Wisconsin; country music entertainer Larry Gatlin; Dale W. Schultz, candidate for Congress in Wisconsin's 3d Congressional District; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Proclamation 7781—Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month, 2004

May 7, 2004

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

During Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month, we honor the accomplishments of Asian/Pacific Americans and the many ways they have enriched our society and shaped the character of our Nation through their diverse languages, cultures, and religious beliefs.

Today, Asian/Pacific Americans are leaders in public service, business, government, science, law, education, athletics, the arts, and many other areas. Their love of family, community, and hard work has helped to uphold our Nation for many generations. Asian/Pacific American entrepreneurs are helping to strengthen our economy and our communities through their hard work and ingenuity, and they inspire a new generation of American innovation through their example.

Throughout our history, Asian/Pacific Americans have been patriots, answering the call to defend our Nation and to protect the blessings of liberty and democracy. Today, in the war on terror, Asian/Pacific Americans serve proudly as they carry on our Nation's noble tradition of advancing the cause of