

another generation. We will lead the cause of peace and freedom. And we will prevail.

Four years ago, I traveled your great State and our country, when I was asking for the vote. I made a pledge to our fellow Americans that if you honored me with this great responsibility, I would uphold the honor and the dignity of the office to which I had been elected. With your help—and with your help, I will do so for 4 more years.

Thanks for coming, and God bless. Thank you all. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:15 a.m. in the Pan American Center at New Mexico State University. In his remarks, he referred to Rudolph W. Giuliani, former mayor of New York City; Nancy Domenici, wife of Senator Pete Domenici; Cynthia Pearce, wife of Representative Steve Pearce; Mayor William Michael Mattiace of Las Cruces, NM; entertainers Ted Scanlon and the Desperados, and Mariachi Espuelas de Plata; and Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya.

### Remarks in Farmington, New Mexico August 26, 2004

**The President.** Thanks for coming. I appreciate—It's good to be here in Farmington, New Mexico, in the Four Corners area of our country. I appreciate you all coming out. I told Rudy, I said, "I can't wait to get to Farmington. You're going to meet some really fine people here. It's a part of the country where the boots outnumber the suits."

The other day, my opponent said he thinks he can find the heart and soul of America in Hollywood.

**Audience members.** Boo-o-o!

**The President.** I think you find it right here in Farmington, New Mexico. I appreciate your hospitality. Rudy and I love being here. I want thank you all for coming out. It's such a beautiful day. I'm here to ask for the vote. I'm traveling with this great leader around New Mexico to tell the people I've got more to do to make this country safer, stronger, and better.

I also want to thank those of you who are involved with grassroots politics. Those are the people who put up the signs. Those are the people who make the phone calls. Those

are the people who help register the voters, people like Bill Redmond, people who run the county here. These are the people who do their duty. See, I think we have a duty in America to vote.

**Audience members.** Yes!

**The President.** I think we have an obligation. I think we have an obligation in this society to go to the polls, and so therefore, I'm asking for your help. I hope you will register people to vote—register Republicans, register independents. I see a man here, he says, "Navajo Democrats for Bush." Register Democrats to vote. And when you get them headed to the polls, tell them we're ready to lead for 4 more years. Tell them we're ready to make this country a safer place and a better place.

I regret that Laura's not with me.

**Audience members.** Aw-w-w!

**The President.** No, I know, she's fabulous. I met the Vice President of the Navajo Nation out at the airport and met his beautiful wife, and the first thing she asked me, she said, "Where's Laura?" [Laughter] She's working. [Laughter]

I kissed her goodbye today in Crawford and headed west. I'm really proud of her. She's a great mom and a wonderful wife. She's a fabulous First Lady. Today I'm going to give you some reasons to put me back in, but perhaps the most important one of all is so that Laura is the First Lady for 4 more years.

I'm running with a good man for Vice President, Dick Cheney. He is a—I know there's a State rep named Dick Cheney from this part of the world. I hope he's as good a man as the Dick Cheney I call runningmate. I bet he is. Dick Cheney is solid as a rock. I picked him because he knows what he's doing. I picked him because he can get the job done. That's why I'm running with Dick Cheney.

Listen, I enjoy working with your Senator, Pete Domenici. He's a good man. He and Nancy are taking a vacation. I don't blame them. He's been working hard for the people of New Mexico. But in his stead, we've got another great United States Senator with us today, and that's my friend Ben Nighthorse Campbell and his wife, Linda, from the State

of Colorado. Where are you? Oh, yeah. [*Laughter*] I'm going to miss you, friend. I'm going to win, and I'm going to miss your presence in the United States Senate. He's a great man. I appreciate you coming.

I want to remind you that we have been through a lot together. We have accomplished a lot too. But you know something, the only reason to look backward at the record is to—who best to lead us forward into the future. I'm here traveling your State because there's so much at stake.

We have done much, but there is more to do to move this country forward. We have more to do to create jobs and improve our schools. We have more to do to fight terror and to protect the American people. We have more to do to spread freedom and peace we all want. We've made progress, and over the next 4 years, we will do more on behalf of the American people.

We've got more to do to make our public schools the centers of excellence we know they can be so no child is left behind in America. You might remember how the system worked 3½ years ago. Too many of our children were being shuffled from grade to grade, year after year, without learning the basics. I went to Washington to challenge the soft bigotry of low expectations. I said, "We'll provide more money from Washington to help the schools, but in return we expect results." We want our children to learn to read and write and add and subtract, and our plan is working. We're closing the achievement gap in America, but there's more to be done. We got to make sure our high school students get more math and sciences, because in order to be able to compete in the 21st century, we're going to need new skills. We got to have early intervention programs to make sure no child is left behind. We want to make sure our high school diploma means something when a kid graduates from high school, so they can find work. What I'm telling you is, after 4 more years, a rising generation will have the skills and the confidence necessary to realize the American Dream.

We've got more to do to make sure that we've got quality health care that's affordable to our citizens. Listen, when we came to office, the Medicare promise had been broken year after year. You might remember those

old campaigns. They'd say, "Vote for me. I'm going to strengthen Medicare." Sure enough, nothing took place in Washington. There's a lot of special interests there, a lot of people dug in. But we got the job done. We strengthened Medicare for our seniors. Starting in the year 2006, seniors will have choices in Medicare, including prescription drug coverage.

We've expanded community health centers for low-income Americans. We will continue to do so over the next 4 years. We've created health savings accounts so families can save tax-free for their health care needs. We're making progress. There is more work to be done. Listen, most Americans get health coverage through their work. Most of today's new jobs are created by small businesses. But small businesses all across America are having trouble with health care. In order to help American families get the health care they need, we must allow small employers to join together so they can purchase insurance at the same discount that big businesses are able to do so.

We will harness technology to save money in health care and to cut down on errors. We will continue to expand research and seek new cures. In order to make sure you've got good docs here in Farmington, New Mexico, in order to make sure we got good health care in this part of the world that's affordable, we need to cut down on the frivolous lawsuits that are running up your cost of medicine.

See, I don't think you can be pro-patient, pro-hospital, and pro-doctor and pro-plaintiff-attorney at the same time. I think you have to choose. My opponent made his choice, and he put him on the ticket. [*Laughter*] I made my choice: I'm standing with the patients and the doctors. I am for medical liability reform—now. In all we do to improve health care in America, we will make sure the health care decisions are made by doctors and patients, not by bureaucrats in Washington, DC.

We've got more to do to make this economy stronger. Our economy has been through a lot. We've been through a recession. We've been through corporate scandals. We've been through a severe attack on our country, and yet, the economy is strong, and

it's getting stronger, because our workers are great. Our farmers are great. Our ranchers know what they're doing. The small-business sector of America is strong and vibrant. The entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well in this country.

I also think one of the reasons we've overcome these obstacles is because of well-timed tax cuts. We gave tax relief to every American who pays taxes. That seems fair.

**Audience members.** Yes!

**The President.** You might remember we helped American families by raising the child credit. We reduced the marriage penalty. The Tax Code penalizes marriage. We ought to be encouraging marriage, not penalizing marriage. We're helping our small businesses. And this time, the check actually was in the mail. [*Laughter*]

Because we acted, our economy since last summer has grown at a rate as fast as any in nearly 20 years. Since last August, we've added about 1.5 million new jobs. The unemployment rate nationally is 5.5 percent, and the unemployment rate in your important State is 5.3 percent.

The economy is strong. It's getting stronger, and there's more to do to keep jobs here at home. We've got to make sure our regulations are reasonable and fair. We need tort reform, not only in the health care field but all across the board to make sure our employers don't spend their money on frivolous lawsuits but are able to do so on their employees.

Listen, in order to make sure jobs stay here, we need a sound energy policy. Of course, we need to encourage conservation and renewable sources of energy, but we need to be exploring for natural gas right here in America too. We need to be less dependent—in order to make sure jobs stay in America, we need to become less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

In order to make sure jobs are here, we've got to open up markets like we've opened up ours. Listen, I believe American workers and farmers and ranchers can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere, so long as the rules are fair.

In order to make sure jobs stay here in America, we've got to make sure our workers have a lifetime of learning available to them. See, this is a changing world, and jobs are

changing. The skill sets are different. That's why I'm such a strong believer in the community college system. I believe we need to use our community colleges and help workers gain the skills necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century.

In order to make sure we keep jobs here, we've got to be wise about how we spend your money. Listen carefully to the rhetoric coming out of Washington. They say, "Well, we're going to spend the Government's money." That's not what I think, and that's what I know—not—that's what I know. We're not talking about the Government's money. We're talking about the people's money. It's your money we spend in Washington, DC.

In order to make sure we keep jobs here in America, we must keep your taxes low. Running up the taxes on the working people and the small businesses of America will slow down this economic recovery. Now, I'm running against a fellow who's already made over \$2 trillion of promises in the course of the campaign, and we haven't even gotten to the stretch run yet. [*Laughter*] We're not even coming down the pike. No telling what he'll promise in October. [*Laughter*] The problem is, he hasn't said how he's going to pay for it. Well, he said one thing; he said he's going to tax the rich. You've heard that before, haven't you?

**Audience members.** Yes!

**The President.** Yes. Guess what? The rich dodge, and you pay.

**Audience members.** Yes!

**The President.** But we're not going to let him. We're going to beat him come November. And it's going to start with carrying the great State of New Mexico.

We have more to do to wage and win the war on terror. America's future depends on our willingness to lead in the world. If America shows uncertainty or weakness in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This isn't going to happen on my watch.

The world changed on a terrible September morning, and since that day, we have changed the world. Before September the 11th of 2001, Afghanistan served as the home base of Al Qaida, which trained and deployed thousands of killers to set up terror cells around the world, including our own country.

Because we acted, Afghanistan is a rising democracy. Because we acted, over 10 million people have registered to vote in a country that a short time ago was brutalized by a barbaric regime called the Taliban. Because we acted, Afghanistan is an ally in the war on terror. Because we acted, many young girls go to school for the first time. Because we acted, America and the world are safer.

Before September the 11th, Pakistan and Saudi didn't take Al Qaida seriously. Today, they are allies in the war against the terrorists. America and the world are safer.

Before September the 11th, Libya was spending millions to acquire weapons of mass destruction. Today, because America and our allies have sent a strong and easy-to-understand message, the leader of Libya has abandoned his pursuit of weapons of mass destruction, and America and the world are safer.

Before September the 11th, the ruler of Iraq was a sworn enemy of America. He was defying the world. He was firing weapons at American pilots enforcing the world's sanctions. He had pursued and he had used weapons of mass destruction. He harbored terrorists. He invaded his neighbors. He subsidized the families of suicide bombers. Saddam Hussein and his henchmen murdered tens of thousands of his own citizens. He was a source of great instability in the world's most volatile region. He was a threat.

**Audience member.** No longer!

**Audience member.** Not anymore!

**The President.** After September the 11th, we had to look at the world differently. It's very important for our country to remember the lessons of September the 11th. One of the clearest lessons is that we must take threats seriously, before they fully materialize.

So I went to the United States Congress. The Congress looked at the intelligence I looked at. They remembered Saddam's history and came to the same conclusion I did—he was a threat—including the person I'm running against, came to that same conclusion.

Because a military action ought to be the last option of an American President, I went to the United Nations. I said to the United Nations, "You have seen a threat in the past.

We see a threat. The world has changed since September the 11th. What do you think?" They came together after a debate, looked at the same intelligence we did, and concluded that Saddam Hussein was a threat, that he must disclose, disarm, or face serious consequences. The world spoke.

But as he had for over a decade, he defied the demands of the free world. See, he didn't seem to care what the free world said. Not only that, when we sent inspectors into the country, he systematically deceived the inspectors. So I had a choice to make. Do I trust a madman and forget the lessons of September the 11th, or take action necessary to defend America? Given that choice, I will defend our country every time.

Even though we did not find the stockpiles that we expected to find, Saddam Hussein had the capability of making weapons of mass destruction and could have passed that capability on to our enemy, and that was a risk we could not afford to take. Knowing what I know today, I would have made the same decision. Saddam Hussein sits in a prison cell, and America and the world are safer.

And now, almost 2 years after he voted for the war in Iraq and nearly 7 months after switching positions to declare himself the antiwar candidate, my opponent has found a new nuance. He now agrees it was the right decision to go into Iraq. See, after months of questioning my motives and even my credibility, the Senator now agrees with me that even though we have not found the stockpiles we thought we would find, knowing everything we know today, he would have voted to go into Iraq and remove Saddam Hussein from power. I want to thank him for clearing that up. However, there's still a little over 60 days for him to change his mind again. [*Laughter*]

I'm running because I understand we must continue to work with our allies and friends to aggressively pursue the terrorist enemy in Iraq and Afghanistan and elsewhere. See, you can't talk sense to these people. You cannot negotiate with them. You cannot hope for the best. We must aggressively pursue them around the world so we do not have to face them here at home.

America will continue to lead the world with confidence and moral clarity. We put

together a strong coalition to help us. There's over 40 nations involved—or nearly 40 nations involved in Afghanistan and some 30 nations involved in Iraq, 60 nations involved in the Proliferation Security Initiative. We'll continue to build alliances and work with our friends for the sake of security and peace. But I'll never turn over America's national security decisions to leaders of other countries.

When America says something, we've got to mean it.

**Audience members.** Yes!

**The President.** In order to make this world a more peaceful place when we speak, we better mean what we say. And so we'll keep our commitments to the people in Afghanistan and Iraq as they become peaceful and democratic societies. It's in our interest they become peaceful and democratic societies, and now they've got two strong leaders who are guiding those nations, people committed to the hopes and aspirations of their fellow citizens. We're training up Iraqi citizens and Afghan citizens to defeat the terrorists who are trying to stop the advance of freedom. We're helping them so they can help themselves. Our military will complete this mission as quickly as possible so our troops don't stay a day longer than necessary.

It's important work we're doing. We're talking about keeping the peace. We're talking about spreading freedom. And our troops are helping us to keep our commitments. I'm proud of the United States military. I'm proud of our troops.

I want to thank the veterans who are here for having set such a great example to those who wear the uniform. We're going to support our troops. That's a commitment we owe not only to those who wear the uniform but the loved ones of those who wear the uniform. That's why last September, while our troops were in combat in Afghanistan and Iraq, I proposed supplemental funding to support them in their mission. This legislation provided funding for body armor and vital equipment, hazard pay, health benefits, ammunition, fuel, and spare parts. It was an important piece of legislation.

We received great bipartisan support. Matter of fact, the support was so strong in

the United States Senate that only 12 Senators voted against that funding, 2 of whom are my opponent and his runningmate. So they asked him, they said, why? He said, "Well, I actually did vote for the \$87 billion, before I voted against it." That's not exactly the way people talk in this part of the world.

**Audience members.** No-o-o!

**The President.** So they pressed him further. He said, well, he's proud of his vote, and the whole thing was just a complicated matter. There is nothing complicated about supporting our troops in combat.

In the long run, our security is not guaranteed by force alone. We will work to change the conditions that give rise to terror, poverty and hopelessness and resentment. See, a free and peaceful Iraq and a free and peaceful Afghanistan will set powerful examples to a part of the world that is desperate for liberty. Free nations do not export terror. Free nations are able to defeat hopelessness, because they listen to the hopes of their people.

By serving the cause of liberty, we're bringing hope to others, and that makes our country more secure. By serving the cause of liberty, we're spreading the peace that we all want. And by serving the cause of liberty, we're serving the deepest ideals of the American spirit. Freedom is not America's gift to the world. Freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

I'm running because I know there's more work to do to protect the homeland. There's enemies who hate us out there that are still plotting. We have a difference of opinion on the enemy, it seems. My opponent said that going to war with the terrorists is actually improving their recruiting efforts. The logic is upside-down. I think it shows a misunderstanding of the enemy. See, during the 1990's, the terrorists were recruiting and training for war with us long before we went to war with them. They don't need an excuse for their hatred. It is wrong to blame this country for staying on the offense. See, we don't create enemies and terrorists by fighting back. We defeat the terrorists by fighting back.

We're working hard to protect you. There's a lot of good people at the Federal level and the State level and the local level who are working long hours to protect the

American people. We're working on reform. There'll be good, solid intelligence reform to make sure that I've got what's needed to make good decisions on behalf of the American people, that we can respond to the threats as they exist.

We've created the Department of Homeland Security to better protect you. We've got to do a better job on our ports and borders. We've got to do a better job of strengthening our intelligence sharing. We need to renew the PATRIOT Act. The PATRIOT Act is a vital tool for law enforcement to bust these terrorist organizations.

I'll continue to push for reform, but it's hard. I mean, there's a lot of entrenched interests. The special interests are strong. That's why it's not enough to advocate reform. You've got to be able to get the job done.

So when you're out campaigning, and when you're out convincing people to go to the polls, you might remind them, when it comes to reforming schools to lift the standard so every child can learn, we're getting the job done. When it comes to health care reforms that have helped our seniors and helped our families, we're getting the job done. When it comes to improving our economy and creating jobs, we're getting the job done. When it comes to better securing the homeland and spreading freedom and peace, we're getting the job done. When it comes to choosing a President, put somebody in there who can get the job done.

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

**The President.** We're living in a time—we're living in changing times. A lot of moms are working. A lot of people are changing jobs. A lot of people need new skills in order to fill the jobs of the 21st century. These are changing times, and I recognize they can be unsettling. But Government can help by standing side by side with people. Instead of ordering people around, Government can help people have the tools so they can decide for themselves. And one way to do so is to promote an ownership society. We want people owning their own health care accounts, so they can take them from job to job.

I see we got a lot of younger workers here. I appreciate you coming. Baby boomers and

older folks can look at Social Security and know it's going to be around for us. Younger workers need to be concerned about the fiscal solvency of Social Security. That's why I believe we ought to give younger workers the option of establishing personal savings accounts with their own money, that they call their own and pass on from generation to generation.

In order to meet the changing times, we've got to change the work rules to give our families flex-time and comp-time so you can better juggle your family needs. In order to make sure that we've got a hopeful America, we've got to continue to spread ownership—ownership of businesses. Listen, I love the fact that the homeownership rate in America is at an alltime high. We'll continue to expand homeownership over the next 4 years. We'll continue to expand ownership—homeownership. There's nothing better than somebody opening up a front door of the house, saying, "Welcome to my home. Welcome to my piece of property." We believe in ownership because we know that when somebody owns something, they have a vital stake in the future of the United States of America.

In this world of rapid change, there are some things that will not change, our belief in liberty, our belief in opportunity, and our belief in the nonnegotiable demands of human dignity. The individual values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. In a changing world, we must honor those institutions that give us direction and purpose, our families, our schools, and our religious congregations.

We stand for institutions like marriage and family, which are the foundations of society. We stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every person counts. We stand for judges who faithfully interpret the law instead of legislating from the bench.

We stand for a culture of responsibility in this country. Listen, the culture of our country 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 we're responsible for the decisions we make in life. If you're fortunate enough to be a mother or a father, you are responsible for loving your child with all your heart and all your soul.

If you're worried about the quality of the education in Farmington, New Mexico, you're responsible for supporting your teachers and 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 responsibility society of ours, each of us is responsible for loving our neighbor just like we'd like to be loved ourself.

I'm running for 4 more years to continue to rally the armies of compassion. See, I believe we can change this country one heart and one soul at a time by relying upon the true strength of America, which is the hearts and souls of the American people.

Today I met Rod Conover. He's involved with Project Read. He's a volunteer. He's taking time out of his life to help somebody else learn to read. See, we'll change this country. We'll change this country by calling upon the great love of the American people to serve something greater than themselves, to help somebody in need, to help the homeless, to feed the hungry, to help the addicted by surrounding with something the Government can't live, which is love. Now, Government can give money, but Government cannot give love. And so over the next 4 years, I'll continue to call upon the great spirit of the American people.

We're living in a—we've come through a lot together. The last 4 years have brought great challenges. I'll never forget the day Rudy and I went to the ruins of the Twin Towers. It was a very emotional day. I remember the workers in hardhats yelling at me, "Whatever it takes." I remember a worker looking me in the eye and saying, "Do not let me down." See, it's clear to me, and I know it's clear to Rudy, that that day, people took it personally on that site. I took it personally. I know you did as well. I have a duty that goes on. I wake up every day trying to figure out how best to secure this homeland. I will never relent in defending America, whatever it takes.

We've done hard work over the past years, and there's more work to be done. During the next 4 years, we will spread ownership and opportunity so everybody can realize the great promise of America. During the next 4 years, we will continue to pass on the en-

during values of our country to a younger generation. During the next 4 years, we will continue to lead in the cause of freedom and peace. With your support, I'll be a leader America can count on in a world of change.

For 4 years, I traveled this great country, including your great State, asking for the vote—4 years ago I did, asking for the vote. I said if you gave me a chance to serve in this high office, I would uphold the dignity and the honor of the office to which I had been elected. And with your help, I will do so for the next 4 years.

Thanks for coming. May God bless. Thank you all. Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:35 p.m. at Ricketts Park. In his remarks, he referred to Rudolph W. Giuliani, former mayor of New York City; former Representative Bill Redmond of New Mexico; Frank Dayish, Jr., Vice President, Navajo Nation, and his wife, Virginia; Representative Richard P. Cheney, New Mexico House of Representatives; Nancy Domenici, wife of Senator Pete Domenici; Linda Nighthorse Campbell, wife of Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell; Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya; President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan; and Prime Minister Ayad al-Alawi of the Iraqi Interim Government.

## Remarks in Albuquerque, New Mexico

August 26, 2004

**The President.** Thank you all. Thanks for coming. Thank you all.

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

**The President.** Thank you all for coming. Gosh, I appreciate so many coming out to say hello to Rudy. [Laughter] We were in Las Cruces and Farmington, and here we end up in the great city of Albuquerque. It's been a fantastic day in the Land of Enchantment.

I want to thank you all for coming out. I told Rudy, "You're going to like it here." I said, "You're going to see more cowboy hats than you see ties." No, we're right here in the heart and soul of America, Albuquerque, New Mexico.