

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:08 p.m. at Madison Square Garden. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ayad al-Alawi of the Iraqi Interim Government; Prime Minister John Howard of Australia; President Aleksander Kwasniewski of Poland; Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; and Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger of California.

### Remarks in Moosic, Pennsylvania

September 3, 2004

**The President.** Thank you all. Thank you all very much. Thank you for coming. I appreciate so many people getting up so early. Laura and I are here to ask for the vote. We're here to let you know that I understand there's more to do to make this country a safer place, a stronger place, and a better place for every American. So we're here; we're pleased to be in Lackawanna County in this beautiful setting. Thanks for having us.

Before I begin, I do—I do know you'll join me in offering our prayers and best wishes to those in the path of the Hurricane Frances. There's been some devastation in the State of Florida. There's likely to be more devastation. And so I've ordered Federal teams to be in position to help the good people of that State, but the best thing we can do here is to offer our prayers.

**Audience member.** I can't hear you! [Laughter]

**The President.** Maybe it's because I gave—maybe it's because I talked too much last night, you know. [Laughter] I enjoyed giving that speech last night, and I am so proud that your State made my nomination official. And with your help, your State of Pennsylvania will be a significant reason we are reelected for 4 more years.

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

**The President.** Laura set the bar pretty high when she gave her speech at the convention. She is—what a great First Lady, a wonderful mom, a terrific wife. Listen, I'm going to give you some reasons why I think you ought to put me back in, but perhaps the most important one of all is so that Laura is First Lady for 4 more years.

I'm proud of my runningmate, Dick Cheney. He doesn't have the longest and prettiest hair in the race. [Laughter] I didn't pick him for his hair. I picked him for his judgment, experience, and because he can get the job done.

I appreciate the fact that Senator Arlen Specter is with us today. Put him back in for 6 more years in the Senate. Look who is next to him, Rick Santorum, United States Senator. Congressman Don Sherwood is here as well. I appreciate you being here, Congressman—good man.

Mayor Lou Barletta is with us from Hazelton, Pennsylvania. Hey, Lou, fill the potholes. [Laughter] I appreciate David Wenzel, the former mayor of Scranton, who is with us here today. David, thank you for coming. My friend Bill Scranton is with us here. I appreciate him coming. I want to thank all the candidates who are here.

I want to thank my friend Mark Chesnutt. He's great, isn't he? Bubba Shot the Jukebox. He's from Beaumont, Texas, and I appreciate him lending his talent to come. I hope you enjoy him as much as I—I love his music.

Most of all, I want to thank the grassroots activists who are here, the people who put up the signs and make the phone calls and encourage people to register to vote. See, I think we have a duty in this country to vote. In a free land, we have a duty to vote. And I'm asking you to register your friends and neighbors to vote. Register Republicans, register independents, register discerning Democrats—like Zell Miller of Georgia, he's a discerning Democrat—and then kind of head them to the poll. And when you get them there, remind them that George Bush and Dick Cheney are ready to lead this country for 4 more years.

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

**The President.** Now, we're coming down the stretch in this race. We got less than 2 months to go. And this is a historic national election. It's a time for choosing. It's going to come down to the records we've built, the convictions we hold, and the vision that guides us forward. Over the next 2 months, I'm looking forward to traveling our country, telling people where I intend to lead our country, and telling people what I believe.

I believe every child can learn in America, and then I believe every school must teach. That's why we passed important education reform that challenges the soft bigotry of low expectations, that says we must measure to determine whether a child can read, and if not, correct problems early before they're too late; that says that local folks ought to be in charge of the schools. It's a plan—we're making good progress across this country, and we're not turning back.

I believe we have a moral responsibility to our seniors. That's why I've worked with Republicans and Democrats to strengthen Medicare. Our seniors now get help buying medicine, and soon every senior will be able to have coverage for prescription drugs. It doesn't make any sense to pay \$100,000 for heart surgery and not pay for the medicine to prevent the heart surgery from happening in the first place. We're making progress in honoring our commitment to our seniors, and we're not turning back.

I believe the role of Government is not to try to create wealth but an environment in which the entrepreneur, the small business, the farmer, and the rancher can survive. I believe in the spirit and innovative power of the American worker, and that is why we unleashed the energy of our economy with the largest tax relief in decades.

Because we acted, our economy is growing again. Because we acted, we've overcome recession, scandal, stock market decline, and a terrorist attack. This morning, we received jobs report for August, and it shows that our economy is strong and getting stronger. We added 144,000 new jobs, plus revisions of about 60,000 for the previous month, which means we've increased jobs over the last 2 months by over 200,000 jobs. Overall, we've added about 1.7 million new jobs since August of '03. The unemployment rate is now down to 5.4 percent. That's nearly a full point below the rate last summer and below the average of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. The unemployment rate in Pennsylvania is 5.3 percent. Our growing economy is spreading prosperity and opportunity, and nothing will hold us back.

I will continue to travel our country telling people what I believe, and I believe the most solemn duty of the President is to protect

the American people. If America shows uncertainty and weakness in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This will not happen on my watch.

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

**The President.** I am running for President with a clear and positive plan to build a safer world and a more hopeful America. I'm running with a compassionate conservative philosophy that says Government should help people improve their lives, not try to run their lives. As I travel this country, I know that this Nation wants steady, consistent, principled leadership, and that is why, with your help, we're going to win 4 more years.

Last night I spent time talking about how the world in which we live is changing. Women now work outside the home as well as work inside the home. Many people change jobs. It's a changing world, and the role of Government is to take the side of our workers and families in a time of change. Most of the fundamental systems of today, the Tax Code and health coverage and pension plans and worker training, were created for the world of yesterday, not tomorrow. I'm running for 4 more years to change those fundamental systems so more Americans can realize the great promise of our country.

My plan begins—any good plan begins with making sure our economy continues to grow. The global market is expanding and creating new markets and new competition. My view is, to create more jobs here in America, this has got to be the best place in the world to do business. That's why we will expand trade in a fair way. Look, we open up our markets, and it's good for you that we do. See, if you have more choices, you're likely to get a product you want at a better price and higher quality. What I'm saying when it comes to trade to other countries is you treat us the way we treat you. We can compete with anybody, anywhere, anytime, so long as the playing field is level.

But we've got to get rid of these junk lawsuits that threaten our small-business owners. We've got to trim back needless regulations that make it hard for people to employ people. In order to make sure that the economy expands, we've got to be wise about how we

spend your money, and we've got to keep your taxes low.

We have a difference in this campaign on low taxes. I'm running against a fellow who has promised over \$2 trillion of new spending so far.

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

**The President.** Yes. And we're just coming down the stretch. By the way, 2 trillion is a lot of money to promise, even for a Senator from Massachusetts. And now they said—so they asked him, “How are you going to pay for it?” And he said, “Well, I'll pay for it all by taxing the rich.” Two things wrong with that: One is you can't raise enough money by so-called taxing the rich to pay for his promises, which means somebody else is going to get stuck with the bill. But the other thing is, you've heard that rhetoric before, haven't you?

**Audience members.** Yes!

**The President.** Yes, tax the rich. You know what that means. They dodge; you pay. But we're not going to let him, because we're going to win in November.

A drag in our economy is the Federal Tax Code, which is a complicated mess. You know, it is filled with special interest loopholes. Our people spend 6 billion hours of paperwork and headache every year. The American people deserve and our economic future depends on a simpler, fairer, progrowth Tax Code. In a second term, I will lead a bipartisan effort to reform and simplify the Federal taxes.

I'll tell you what else we need to do. We need to help our workers train for the new jobs of the 21st century. In a changing world, the jobs change, and oftentimes, there's a skills gap. And so we're going to make sure our community college system works better for our workers. We're going to provide more money to help workers gain the skills necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century.

Most new jobs are filled by people with at least 2 years of college, and yet only about one in four of our students gets there. And so in our high schools, we'll fund early intervention programs to help students at risk. We will place a new focus on math and science. Over time, we will require exit exams from high school because we want the high school diploma to mean something. By raising per-

formance in the high schools and by expanding Pell grants for low- and middle-income families, we will help more Americans start their career with a college diploma.

There's more to do to make sure quality health care is available and affordable. More than one half of the uninsured in America are small-business employees and their families. In order to make sure small businesses can afford health care, we must allow small firms to join together to purchase insurance at the discounts available to big companies.

We will help small businesses and low-income Americans set up and purchase health savings accounts. In a new term, I will ensure that every poor county in America has got community health centers to make sure that people get preventative and primary care, not in the emergency rooms of America but in these clinics for low-income Americans. In all we do, we'll make sure that the health decisions are made by doctors and patient, not by bureaucrats in Washington, DC.

I want to talk about a national issue that is of concern to millions here in Pennsylvania. Too many good doctors, too many really fine healers are being forced out of practice because of the high cost of junk lawsuits. You cannot be pro-doctor and pro-patient and pro-plaintiff-attorney at the same time. You have to choose. My opponent made his choice, and he put him on the ticket.

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

**The President.** I made my choice. I'm standing with the docs and patients. We want medical liability reform—now.

Let me give you a quick story about what I'm talking about. I'm telling you, this is a national problem that requires a national solution. And there is a clear difference in this campaign on this issue. Today I met with Dr. Neal Davis from Carbondale. [Applause] He told all his patients to come—[laughter]—and Mary Coar, one of his patients. I want you to hear this story because it's happening all across America.

Last November, after 15 years of practice in Pennsylvania, Dr. Davis learned that his insurance company would no longer insure physicians in this State because of the junk lawsuits, because the law system here in terms of medicine is like a lottery, is what it's like. It's unfair to patients, and it's unfair

to doctors. It's unfair to taxpayers. He found a new policy, but it said he had to give up delivering babies as part of the coverage. That's what's happening to ob-gyns all across the country.

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

**The President.** That forced Mary, 4 months pregnant, to start driving 50 miles each way to see different doctors—a different doctor. When Mary's daughter arrived this summer, she was delivered by a doctor Mary had never met. She said, "I started to cry when he told me he was going to have to stop delivering." This is happening because the legal system is gone awry. We need medical liability reform now.

Another priority for my administration in a new term will be an ownership society. See, I believe when you own something, your life is more secure; you have more dignity; and you have independence. And so we'll help more people own their own homes, own their own health plan, and gain the confidence of owning a piece of their retirement. There's nothing better in America than somebody opening their door saying, "Welcome to my home." Today, the homeownership rate in America is at an alltime high. We will expand more homeownership over the next 4 years.

Listen, we will keep the promise of Social Security for baby boomers and older—I happen to be a baby boomer. But younger workers need to worry about the fiscal solvency of Social Security. We will strengthen Social Security by allowing younger workers to save some of their taxes in a personal account, an account they can call their own, and an account that Government can never take away.

In a world of change, there are some things that won't change, the values we try to live by, the institutions that give our lives meaning and purpose. Because family and work are sources of stability and dignity, I support welfare reform that strengthen family and require work.

I support a culture of life in which every person matters and every person counts. Because religious charities provide a safety net of mercy and compassion, our Government must never discriminate against those programs. I support marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. And I will continue to appoint Federal judges who

know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law.

When he was campaigning out—I think it was in the Midwest, my opponent announced he was the candidate of "conservative values."

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

**The President.** Which must have confused a lot of his supporters. [*Laughter*] See, if you say you're—if you say that the heart and soul of America is found in Hollywood, I'm not—I'm afraid you're not the candidate of conservative values. If you voted against a bipartisan Defense of Marriage Act, which my predecessor signed, you are not the candidate of conservative values. If you consistently vote against the rights guaranteed by the Second Amendment as my opponent has, you are not the candidate of conservative values. There is a clear difference of philosophy in this race. He is for expanding Government. I am for expanding opportunity.

This election will also determine how America responds to the continuing danger of terrorism. Since the terrible morning of September the 11th, we have fought the terrorists across the globe, not for pride, not for power—because the security of our country depends on it. Our strategy is clear. We're defending the homeland. I want to thank you for helping raise Tom Ridge. He's doing a fine job in the Department of Homeland Security. We're transforming our military. We're reforming our intelligence services. We will stay on the offensive. We will strike the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home. And we will continue to work to advance liberty—liberty in the broader Middle East—because freedom will bring a future of hope and the peace we all want. If America stays strong and resolute and determined, we will prevail.

And our strategy is succeeding. We're making progress. Four years ago, Afghanistan was the home base of Al Qaida. Pakistan was a transit point for the terrorist groups. Saudi was fertile ground for terrorist fundraising. Libya was secretly pursuing nuclear weapons. Iraq was a gathering threat, and Al Qaida was largely unchallenged as it planned attacks. Now, after we acted, now after the United States led—and many have joined—the Government of a free Afghanistan is

fighting terror. Pakistan is capturing terrorists. Saudi Arabia is making raids and arrests. Libya is dismantling its weapons programs. The army of a free Iraq is fighting for freedom, and more than three-quarters of Al Qaida's members and associates have been detained or killed.

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

[At this point, an audience member fainted.]

**The President.** Get another doc. Get a doctor.

This progress involves careful diplomacy, clear moral purpose, and some tough decisions. The toughest came on Iraq. We knew Saddam Hussein's record of aggression and support for terror. We knew his long history of pursuing, even using weapons of mass destruction. And we know that September the 11th requires our country to think differently. We must confront threats before they fully materialize. In Saddam Hussein, we saw a threat. Members of both political parties looked at the same intelligence, remembered the same history, and came to the same conclusion. Saddam Hussein was a threat. My opponent, in 2002, looked at the very same intelligence I looked at, and he came the same conclusion. See, he was one of the Members of Congress that voted to authorize the use of force because Saddam Hussein was a threat.

The last option for the Commander in Chief is to commit troops, and so I went to the United Nations. See, I believe we ought to try diplomacy before we commit troops. The United Nations passed a unanimous resolution demanding that Saddam Hussein disclose, disarm, or face serious consequences. The free world spoke loud and clear. Yet Saddam Hussein, as he had for over a decade of diplomacy, ignored the demands of the free world. As a matter of fact, when we sent inspectors—or when the U.N. sent inspectors in, he systematically deceived the inspectors.

We gave Saddam Hussein a final chance to meet his responsibility to the civilized world. And when he refused, I faced the kind of decision that comes only to the Oval Office, a decision no President would ask for but must be prepared to make. Do I trust

the word of a madman and forget the lessons of September the 11th, or take action to defend America? Given that choice, I will defend America every time.

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

**The President.** America and the world are safer with Saddam Hussein sitting in a prison cell. Because we acted to defend our country, the murderous regimes of Saddam and the Taliban are history. More than 50 million people now live in freedom.

Democracy is on the march in a part of the world that is desperate for freedom. You realize that over 10 million citizens have registered to vote in the upcoming Afghan Presidential elections. It's amazing, isn't it? Think about what life was like 3 years ago for the people of that country. They were run by a group of barbarians, and today, they're showing up in the thousands to exercise their right as free men and women.

In Iraq, there's a strong leader; there's a national council; and elections in that country are scheduled in January. See, our Nation is standing with the people of Afghanistan and Iraq because when America gives its word, America must keep its word.

But as importantly, we're serving a vital and historic cause that will make our country safer. See, free societies do not export terror. Free societies do not feed the resentment of their people. Free governments will fight terrorists, instead of harboring them, and that helps keep America more secure and the world more peaceful. Our mission and goals in Afghanistan and Iraq are clear: We will help new leaders train their armies so the Iraq and the Afghan people can defend the freedom within their borders. We will get them on the path of stability and democracy as quickly as possible, and then our troops will return home with the honor they have earned.

At bases across the country, I've had the privilege of meeting with those who defend our country. I've seen their decency and unselfish courage. I assure you, the cause of freedom is in really good hands. I am proud of our military. They deserve—and I want to thank the vets who are here today for having set such a great example for those who wear our uniform.

I made a commitment to our troops and their loved ones, they'll have all the resources they need to do their jobs. That's why I submitted a supplemental funding request to the Congress last September for \$87 billion, money needed for fuel and spare parts and body armor and equipment, ammunition, hazard pay, health benefits, to support our troops in combat in both Iraq and Afghanistan, see. And that proposal received bipartisan support, strong bipartisan support, except for 12 Members from the United States Senate who voted against the funding.

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

**The President.** As a matter of fact, only four United States Senators voted to authorize the use of force and then voted against the funding for our troops.

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

**The President.** Two of those four are my runningmate and his opponent.

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

**The President.** So they asked him how could he have done that. He said, "I actually did vote for the \$87 billion, before I voted against it." Now, we've got some motorcycle drivers here? [Applause] Yes. I suspect you guys don't talk that way. They pressed him further, he said he was proud of his vote, and then he just said, "The whole thing was a complicated matter"—his words. Here are my words: There's nothing complicated about supporting our troops in combat.

We'll continue to work with nations around the world. We have some 40 nations in Afghanistan, nearly 30 in Iraq. These are strong, fine allies, who are making the same sacrifices we are to send their troops to secure the world and make the world more free. During the next 4 years, I'll continue to build alliances and work with our friends. But I will never turn over America's national security decisions to leaders of other countries.

I believe in the transformational power of liberty. The wisest use of American strength is to advance freedom. I believe that America is called to lead the cause of freedom. You know, I spend time with Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan. He's a friend. Not all that long ago, though, his country was at war with us. Matter of fact, my dad, I'm sure your dad or granddad fought a bloody war against

the Japanese. But because my predecessor Harry Truman and others believed in the power of liberty to transform lives and nations, after World War II, we worked with Japan to develop a democracy, and today I sit down at the same table with Prime Minister Koizumi to discuss the peace.

Liberty can change nations from enemies to friends. Liberty will change—liberty will help transform Iraq from tyranny to a free and just society. Some day an American leader will be sitting down at the table with an elected Iraqi leader, saying thank goodness this generation of Americans had great faith in the value of liberty, and they will be discussing the peace. I believe this because I know that freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

With the right leadership, this young century will be liberty's century. It will be a century of freedom. By promoting freedom at home and abroad, we will build a safer world and a more hopeful America.

For all Americans, these years in our history will stand apart. See, there are quiet times in the life of nation when little is expected of its leader. This is not one of those times. This is times where we need firm resolve and great faith in the values that make us a wonderful country.

None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began. As I mentioned last night, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers on September the 14th, 2001. It's a day I will never forget. There were workers in hardhats there, yelling at the top of their lungs, "Whatever it takes." I was thanking—I was trying to thank people as best as I possibly could. I guy grabbed me by the arm. He looked me in the eye, and he said, "Do not let me down." Every day I wake up thinking about how better to protect America. I will never relent in defending our country, whatever it takes.

I am so proud so many came out today. Laura and I thank you for coming. When I traveled your State 4 years ago, I made this pledge, that if you honored me with the great responsibility of serving the American people, I would uphold the dignity and the honor of the office to which I had been elected.

With your help, with your hard work, we will do so for the next 4 years.

God bless. Thank you all for coming. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:35 a.m. at Lackawanna County Stadium. In his remarks, he referred to former Lt. Gov. Bill Scranton of Pennsylvania; country music entertainer Mark Chesnutt; and Prime Minister Ayad al-Alawi of the Iraqi Interim Government. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady, who introduced the President.

### Remarks in West Allis, Wisconsin

September 3, 2004

**The President.** Thank you all. Thank you all for coming. Thank you all. That's what I'm here to tell you. I've got the vision, the desire to lead this country for 4 more years. I want to thank you all for coming. Before I thank you for the work you're going to do and before I talk to you about why I want to be your President for 4 more years, I do want to address several situations in the news that call for our concern and prayers.

En route here we just received news that President Clinton has been hospitalized in New York. He is in our thoughts and prayers. We send him our best wishes for a swift and speedy recovery.

In Florida, our citizens are bracing for yet another hurricane. Many people there are being displaced from their homes. The Federal Government stands ready to help the people of Florida in any way we can, and the people there need to know all America is praying for their safety.

And finally, in Russia, hundreds of agonized parents are worried about the fate of their children. This is yet another grim reminder of the lengths to which terrorists will go to threaten the civilized world. We mourn the innocent lives that have been lost. We stand with the people of Russia. We send them our prayers in this terrible situation.

And finally, I'm here to thank you for your help, thank you for registering people to vote, thank you for working hard. There is no doubt in my mind, we will carry Wisconsin and carry this country.

We love coming to Wisconsin. It's the home of some really fine people. It's a beautiful State, and you play great football. You know, it's traditional when politicians come to your State that they talk about the Packers. And I understand my opponent did it the other day, and he even mentioned the legendary stadium in Green Bay. *[Laughter]* Listen, I've got some advice for him: If someone offers you a cheesehead, don't say you want some wine. *[Laughter]* Just put it on your head and take a seat at Lambeau Field.

I'm going to give you some reasons to put me in, but perhaps the most important one of all is so that Laura will be First Lady for 4 more years. Man, she gave a great speech. You know, when I asked her to marry me, it was in Midland, Texas. She said, "I'll marry you so long as I don't ever have to give a speech." *[Laughter]* I said, "Okay," but fortunately, she didn't hold me to the promise. The country got to see that she is calm, steady, compassionate, and a great First Lady.

I want to thank—the other night I had a chance to thank publicly my runningmate, Dick Cheney. He's a fine man. You know, I admit it, he's not the prettiest face in the race. I didn't pick him for his looks. I picked him because of his judgment, his experience, and his ability to get the job done.

I want to thank three Members of the United States Congress from Wisconsin who are here today. Jim Sensenbrenner, the chairman, is with us today—appreciate you. Tom Petri is with us today. Congressman, thank you for coming. And Congressman Mark Green is with us today. I appreciate you coming, Mark.

I want to thank my friend Scott Walker, who is here today. If he plays his cards right, they may just start calling him "W." I appreciate Mary Panzer and John Gard. I want to thank all the State and local officials who are here.

I want to thank the Democrats for Bush national cochairman, who is with us, Brian Lunde. You know, Brian and Zell Miller—they're leading—they're on to something. *[Laughter]* There's a lot of discerning Democrats who understand that 4 more years will make this country safer, stronger, and better.