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the leading edge of the transformation. I remember those stories about the pilots loading up here in Missouri, flying over and delivering ordnances and coming home. Now, that's the—that's a military which has been transformed.

And so the stealth was on the leading edge of transformation. It's a new way to approach how to keep the peace, and the fact that we've got the capacity to fly long-range out of our country to deliver ordnance and come back home is—reflects what I'm talking about. In other words, the military has got to be lethal, easier to move, and stealthy, in this case.

And so I'm—people have seen how I've used our military up to now. We're going to make it stronger as time goes on by reconfiguring. It makes these home bases more important. And I appreciate you bringing that up.

Listen, I do have to go, otherwise the people will be waiting. I hate to keep people waiting.

God bless you. Thanks for your time. Get out and vote.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:06 p.m. at the Missouri State Fairgrounds. In his remarks, he referred to William H.T. "Bucky" Bush, Missouri State chairman, Bush-Cheney '04, Inc.; Charles E. Kruse, president, board of directors, Missouri Farm Bureau; Mayor Robert Wasson of Sedalia, MO; Senator Zell Miller of Georgia, who made the keynote address at the Republican National Convention; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; A.Q. Khan, former head of Pakistan's nuclear weapons program; Prime Minister Ayad Allawi of the Iraqi Interim Government; Col. Muammar Abu Minyar al-Qadhafi, leader of Libya; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; and Prime Minister John Howard of Australia.

Remarks in Columbia, Missouri

September 7, 2004

The President. Thank you all for coming.

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

The President. Thanks for coming. I appreciate it. That's what I'm here to tell you: I'm ready to lead this Nation for 4 more years. It is great to be back in Columbia. It is nice to be here at the Boone County Fairgrounds. I was hoping to get a corny dog. [*Laughter*] Thanks for coming.

We're taking a bus tour across your State. It's a great way to spend a Tuesday. I'll tell you why I'm here. I'm here to ask for the vote. I believe we've got to get out—I'm not only here to ask for the vote; I'm here to ask for your help. I think we have a duty in this country to vote, and I'm here to ask you to register your friends and neighbors to vote. And then after you get them registered to vote, head them to the polls. And as you get them going to the polls, remind them, if they want a safer country, a stronger country, a better country, put me and Dick Cheney back in office.

And by the way, when you're registering people, make sure you not only register Republicans and independents, but make sure you include discerning Democrats too. You might remember Zell Miller. He's a discerning Democrat, and there's a lot of folks like him all across this country. I appreciate you coming. It means a lot to me that you're here.

My only regret is that Laura is not here.

Audience members. Aw-w-w!

The President. Yes, I know it. When I asked her to marry me, she said, "Fine, just so long as I never have to give a political speech." [*Laughter*] I said, "Okay." [*Laughter*] Fortunately she didn't hold me to the promise. As you all saw, she is a—has got a lot of class. She is a great First Lady, a wonderful mom. I love her dearly. Perhaps the most important reason to put me back in there is so that she'll have 4 more years as the First Lady.

I'm proud to be running with Dick Cheney as well. He's a fine Vice President. He doesn't have the waviest hair in the race. I didn't pick him for his hairdo. I picked him because he's a man of enormous experience and sound judgment, and he can get the job done for the American people.

I'm proud to be standing up here with Kenny. Congressman Hulshof is a fine, fine Member of the United States Congress. I appreciate it. I'm proud to call him friend.

I understand that Governor Blunt was here. I know Lieutenant Governor Kinder is

here. Good to see you, Peter. Thanks for coming. Pete's a good friend of mine, been a friend for quite a while.

I appreciate the speaker being here, Catherine Hanaway. And I appreciate the fact that Sarah Steelman was here. I want to thank all the other State and local officials. I appreciate your attendance.

I want to thank my uncle, Bucky Bush, from St. Louis, Missouri. He's here with us today.

I thank Ernie Lee, State veterans cochairman, is with us today. I appreciate you coming, Ernie. I want to thank Mark Wills, the country and western singer, for entertaining you here.

But most of all, thank you. I'm here to tell you, I'm looking forward to this campaign. I'm looking forward to telling you where I stand and what I believe and where I'll lead this country. I believe every child can learn and every school must teach. I went to Washington to challenge the soft bigotry of low expectations. See, I believe you've got to raise the bar. I believe you must assess early so you can solve problems before they're too late. I believe we've got to end this practice of simply shuffling the kids through the schools year after year, grade after grade, without learning the basics. I believe in local control of schools. And I know we're closing the achievement gap in America, and we're not turning back.

We have a moral responsibility to honor our citizens with good health care. Medicare is a really important program, yet it wasn't modernizing like medicine was. For example, we were willing to pay—or did pay $100,000 for heart surgery but would not pay for the prescription drugs that would have prevented the heart surgery from happening in the first place. That didn't make any sense for our seniors, and it didn't make any sense for our taxpayers. We've strengthened and modernized Medicare for our seniors. Beginning in 2006, all seniors can have prescription drugs in Medicare, and we're not turning back.

I believe in the energy and innovation of the American workers and farmers and ranchers and small-business owners, so we unleashed that energy with the largest tax cut in a generation. When you're out gathering the vote, remind your friends and neighbors what this economy has been through. We've been through a recession. We've been through corporate scandals, and we've been through that attack, which hurt our economy. But we're overcoming those obstacles. We're overcoming them because we're a great country. We're overcoming them because the entrepreneurial spirit is strong. We're overcoming them because we believe in the creativity of the workforce.

Last Friday, we received a jobs report that shows we added 144,000 new jobs in the month of August—1.7 million new jobs since August of '03. The national unemployment rate is at 5.4 percent. That's a full point below the peak of last summer. It is lower than the average rate of the 1970s and the 1980s and the 1990s. Our economic stimulus plan is working.

I believe a President must confront problems, not pass them on to future Presidents and future generations. And I believe the most solemn duty of the American President is to protect the American people. If America shows uncertainty or weakness in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This isn't going to happen on my watch.

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

The President. I'm 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 governments should help people improve their lives, not try to run their lives. And I believe this Nation wants steady, consistent, principled leadership, and that is why, with your help, we will carry Missouri again and win a great victory in November.

The world in which we live is changing. You know, our dads and granddads generally had one job, one career; that company they worked for provided a pension plan and health benefits. The world we're living in is different. Women now work outside the home. They work in the home and outside the home. Many people are changing careers often. Yet many of the most fundamental systems, our Tax Code and health coverage and pension plans and worker training, were created for the world of yesterday. They were

designed for the world of yesterday, not tomorrow. And so we'll transform these systems. And we will do so so all citizens are equipped, prepared, and thus truly free to make your own choices, so you can live your own dreams.

A hopeful society is one in which the economy is growing. And I have a plan to keep this economy moving forward. To create more jobs in America, America must be the best place in the world to do business. To create jobs in America, we must stop the junk lawsuits that threaten our small-business owners. The cost to our economy of litigation is conservatively estimated to be over $230 billion a year.

We have a difference of opinion in this race. Now, I recognize my opponent changes positions a lot, but for 20 years, he's been one of the trial lawyers' most reliable friends. He's consistently voted against legal reform that protects our entrepreneurs and our workers. Fellow lawyers have responded with millions of dollars of donations for his campaign. I just disagree. See, I'm taking a different view. I believe we've got to stop those junk lawsuits. Personal injury lawyers shouldn't get richer at the expense of hard-working Americans.

To create jobs here in America, Congress needs to get an energy plan to my desk. I submitted a plan 2 years ago. It encourages conservation, encourages the use of renewables like ethanol and biodiesel. It encourages clean coal technology and exploration for hydrocarbons in a sensitive way. To keep jobs here, we must become less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

To create jobs here, we must reject economic isolationism and open up markets for U.S. goods and services. See, we open up our markets to other countries, which is good for you. It means you have more choices, and when you have more choices in the marketplace, you're likely to get that which you want at a better price and higher quality. So what we're telling other countries like China is, you treat us the way we treat you. American workers and farmers can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere, so long as the playing field is level.

And one reason our ag economy is so strong today is because we're selling soybeans around the world, and we're selling corn around the world, and I intend to keep markets open so our farmers can make a good living.

We have a difference in this campaign on taxes. See, I believe in order to keep jobs here in America, we've got to be wise about how we spend your money and keep your taxes low. I think running up the taxes on the people now would be a mistake. It would hurt our economic growth. The fellow I'm running against has proposed over $2 trillion of new Federal spending so far.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. It's awfully tempting, when you get out there, to tell people what they want to hear. So they asked him—they said, "Well, how are you going to pay for it?" And he said, "Well, don't worry. I'll pay for it by taxing the rich." Well, first of all, you can't raise enough money by taxing the rich to pay for all his promises. You know what that means. Secondly, you've heard that rhetoric before, haven't you? "Oh, don't worry, we'll just tax the rich." Well, the rich hire lawyers and accountants, and you get stuck with the bill. But we're not going to let him. We're going to win in November.

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

The President. Let me say something else about the Tax Code. The Tax Code is a drag on our economy. It's a complicated mess. It's filled with special interest loopholes. It is estimated that the Tax Code burdens Americans with more than 6 billion hours of paperwork every year. In a new term, I will lead a bipartisan effort to simplify and reform the Federal Tax Code.

Listen, we've got to do more to keep jobs here in America. We've got to help people gain the skills necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century. That's why I'm such a strong believer in the community college system of America. And we'll help workers retrain in our community colleges. As well we will double the number of people served by our principal job training programs.

Most new jobs in America, by the way, are filled with people with at least 2 years of college. And yet, one in four of our students gets there. In our high schools, we'll fund early intervention programs to help students

at risk. We'll provide new focus on math and science. Over time, we'll require a rigorous exam before graduation. By raising performance in our 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.

In changing times, we've got to do more to make health care available and affordable. See, most of the uninsured, one-half of the working uninsured, are employees of small businesses. Yet, small businesses are having trouble affording health care. And there are some reasons why. In order to make sure our families get the help they need, we must allow small firms to join together to purchase insurance at the discounts available for big companies.

We will expand health savings accounts to help our small businesses and families. We will ensure every poor county in America has a community or rural health center. But to make sure that health care is available and affordable, we need medical liability reform in America. Let me tell you, these frivolous lawsuits against our docs are making it harder for good doctors to practice medicine, and they're running up the cost of your health care.

I met Mike Ditmore, sitting right there. He's a doc. He's a neurosurgeon. He was, until his premiums went up to $108,000 a year. These lawsuits drove him out of business. There's one less good doctor available for help here in the State of Missouri. I met doctors all over our country. Talk to your obgyns. Ask them what it's like to live in a world in which these junk lawsuits are making it hard for them to practice medicine. It's not right. We need medical liability reform now in America.

By the way, Dr. Ditmore is so upset about medical liability reform and other issues, he's running for the State senate to do something about it.

In all we do to help the folks in health care, we'll make sure the decisions are made by doctors and patients, not by bureaucrats in Washington, DC.

I'll continue to promote ownership in America. See, during changing times, if you own something, it brings stability to your life. We want more people owning their own home. Do you realize the homeownership rate in America is at an alltime high now? More people owning their home. We've got a plan to expand ownership. We want more people opening their front door and saying, "Welcome to my home. Welcome to my piece of property."

Another important part of ownership is our retirement system. If you're an older citizen, you don't have to worry about Social Security. The promise our Government made to you will be kept. If you're a baby boomer, we're in pretty good shape when it comes to Social Security. But we need to worry about our children and grandchildren when it comes to Social Security. I hope the youngsters listen carefully to this debate about Social Security. See, I believe younger workers ought to be allowed to take some of their tax money and put it in a personal savings account, to make sure the Social Security system is available to them.

We have a difference when it comes to policy here at home. If you listen carefully, my opponent plans to expand Government. My plan is to expand opportunity, because I trust the American people.

In a world of change, there are some things that do not change, the values we try to live by, courage, compassion, reverence, and integrity. In times of change, we'll support the institutions that bring stability to our society, our families, our schools, our religious congregations. We stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every person counts. We stand for marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. I stand for the appointment of Federal judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law.

This election will also determine how America responds to the continuing danger of terrorism. Since the terrible morning of September the 11th, 2001, we fought the terrorists across the Earth, not for pride, not for power, but because the lives of our citizens are at stake. Our strategy is clear. We're defending the homeland. We're transforming our military. We're strengthening our intelligence services. We're staying on the offensive. We're striking the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home.

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

The President. And we will advance—we will work to advance liberty around the world, because we know that freedom will bring a future of hope and peace that we all long for. And we will prevail.

Our strategy is succeeding. Four years ago, Afghanistan was the home base of Al Qaida; Pakistan was a transit point for 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. Because we acted, the Government of a free Afghanistan is fighting terror; Pakistan is capturing terrorist leaders; 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 brought to justice. We have led. Many have joined, and America and the world are safer.

The progress involved careful diplomacy, clear moral purpose, and some tough decisions. And the toughest came on Iraq. We knew Saddam Hussein's record of aggression and his support for terror. We knew his long history of pursuing and using weapons of mass destruction. And we know that after September the 11th, we must think differently. America must take threats seriously before they fully materialize.

In Saddam Hussein, we saw a threat. I went to the United States Congress. They looked at the same intelligence I looked at, remembered the same history I remembered, and concluded that Saddam Hussein was a threat and authorized the use of force. My opponent looked at the same intelligence I looked at, and he voted for the use of force.

Before the Commander in Chief commits our troops into combat, we must try all means to deal with the threat. So I was hoping diplomacy would work, and I went to the United Nations. And I said to the United Nations, "We see a threat." They looked at the same intelligence I looked at. They remembered the same history we remembered. And they voted by a 15-to-nothing vote in the Security Council that said, "Saddam Hussein must disclose, disarm, or face serious consequences." The world spoke.

But as he had for over a decade, Saddam Hussein ignored the demands of the free world. As a matter of fact, when the United Nations sent inspectors into Iraq, he systematically deceived them. So I had a choice, a choice that only comes to the President, a choice no President wants to make but best be prepared to make it. And that is, do I forget the lessons of September the 11th, trust a madman, or take action to defend America? Given that choice, I will defend our country every time.

Because we defended to act—because we acted to defend our country, 50 million people now live in freedom. In Afghanistan—this is an amazing thought, at least it is for me. You know, the Taliban was running this country, and they wouldn't let young girls go to school. And if their moms stepped out of line, they whipped them in the public square and sometimes killed them. These guys were brutal. They were backward. They had a dim view of the world. Light is arising in Afghanistan. Ten million people have registered to vote in the upcoming Presidential elections. Amazing.

Despite ongoing acts of violence and despite the fact it wasn't all that long ago that a tyrant brutally ruled a country in Iraq, Iraq now has a strong Prime Minister, a National Council, and national elections are scheduled for January. The world is changing, and we will stand with the people of Afghanistan and Iraq, because when America gives its word, America must keep its word.

We are also serving a vital and historic cause that will make our country safer. Free societies in the Middle East will be hopeful societies which no longer feed resentment and breed violence for export. Free governments in the Middle East will fight terrorists instead of harboring them, and that makes America more secure and the world more peaceful.

So our mission in Afghanistan and Iraq is clear. We'll help new leaders train their armies. We want Iraqis and Afghan citizens doing the hard work of defending freedom. We'll help them through their elections. We'll move—we'll 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.

I am proud of our military. I have had the honor of meeting our men and women who wear the uniform here at home and around the world. I've seen their courage and their great decency. The cause of freedom is in really good hands. And I want to thank the veterans who are here for having set such a great example for those who wear today's uniform.

I made a commitment to our troops and to their loved ones. They will have the resources they need to complete their missions. That's why in September of '03, a year ago, I went to the United States Congress and requested $87 billion in funding for body armor and spare parts, ammunition, fuel, and supplies needed for our troops doing battle in Afghanistan and Iraq. And we received great support for that request. As a matter of fact, only 12 United States Senators voted against the funding—[*laughter*]—2 of whom were my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. So they—do you realize this? Four United States Senators—only four—voted to authorize the use of force and then voted against funding our troops.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

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

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. So they asked him, they said, "Why?" He said, "Well, I actually did vote for the $87 billion, before I voted against it." And then they said, you know—he said, well, he's proud of it, and finally said, "It's just a complicated matter." [*Laughter*] That's what he said. There's nothing complicated about supporting our troops in combat.

A Commander in Chief must be steady, must have a clear vision, must speak clearly. My opponent has now voted for the war and against supplying our troops. When he got on in the Democrat primary, he declared himself the antiwar candidate. Most recently, he switched again, saying he would have voted for the war, even knowing everything we know today. And then in the last 2 days, he woke up with yet another new position, and this one isn't even his own. [*Laughter*] It's the one of Howard Dean. He even used the same words Howard Dean did back when he supposedly disagreed with him. [*Laughter*] Look, no matter how many times my opponent flip-flops, we were right to make America safer by removing Saddam Hussein from power.

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

The President. I appreciate the contributions our friends and allies are making. It is wrong for my opponent to denigrate the contributions of our allies, people who are standing side by side with our men and women in uniform, risking their lives for freedom and peace. Over the next 4 years, I'll continue to build alliances. We'll work together. But I will never turn over America's national security decisions to leaders of other countries.

I believe in the transformational power of liberty. I believe the wisest use of American strength is to advance freedom. You know, I've spent a lot of time with Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan. It wasn't all that long ago in the march of history that our dads and granddads were fighting the Japanese. They were a sworn enemy of America. And yet, because Harry Truman of Missouri and other folks during that period of time believed liberty could transform societies, Japan is free today.

See, there was a lot of skeptics during those days, I'm certain, that said, "How could an enemy ever be an ally? We just fought them." But people believed in power of liberty to change enemies to friends. And so today, I sit down with the head of a former enemy talking about the peace, talking about how to make the world more peaceful. Someday, a duly elected leader of Iraq is going to sit down with an American leader, and they'll be talking about the peace. And our children and grandchildren will be better off for it.

I believe millions in the Middle East plead for liberty. I believe women want to be free. I believe that given the chance, the people of the Middle East will embrace the most honorable form of government ever devised by man. I believe these—freedom is not America's gift to the world. Freedom is the

Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

This young century will be liberty's century. By promoting freedom at home and abroad, we'll build a safer world and a more hopeful America. By reforming our systems of government, the American people will be better able to realize their dreams. We'll spread ownership and opportunity to every corner of this country. We'll pass the enduring values of our country to a new generation. We will continue to lead the world in freedom and peace.

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. This is a time when we need firm resolve, clear vision, and a deep faith in the values that make us a great nation.

None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began. September the 14th, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. It's a day I'll never forget. There were workers there yelling at me at the top of their lungs, "Whatever it takes!" I was doing my best to thank people and comfort them, and a guy grabbed me by the arm, he looked me in the eye, and he said, "Do not let me down." As we did that day, he took it personally. I took it personally. You all took it personally. I have a duty that goes on. I wake up every morning thinking about how to better protect our country. I will never relent in defending America, whatever it takes.

Four years ago, I traveled your great State asking for the vote. I said if you gave me the chance to serve, I would uphold the dignity and the honor of the office to which I had been elected. With your help and hard work, I will do so for the next 4 years.

May God bless you. Thank you for coming. I appreciate it. Thank you all. Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:40 p.m. at the Boone County Fairgrounds. In his remarks, he referred to Senator Zell Miller of Georgia, who made the keynote address at the Republican National Convention; Missouri Secretary of State Matt Blunt, candidate for Missouri Governor; Missouri State Senator Peter Kinder, candidate for Missouri Lieutenant Governor; Catherine L. Hanaway, speaker, Missouri House of Representatives; Missouri State Senator Sarah Steelman; William H.T. "Bucky" Bush, Missouri State chairman, Bush-Cheney '04, Inc.; Ernie Lee, cochairman, Missouri Veterans Leadership Team, Bush-Cheney '04, Inc.; Prime Minister Ayad Allawi of the Iraqi Interim Government; former Democratic Presidential candidate Howard Dean; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Proclamation 7808—To Modify the Generalized System of Preferences, and for Other Purposes

September 7, 2004

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

1. Pursuant to sections 501 and 502(a)(1) of Title V of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the "1974 Act") (19 U.S.C. 2461, 2462(a)(1)), the President is authorized to designate countries as beneficiary developing countries for purposes of the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP).

2. Pursuant to section 503(d) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(d)), the President may waive the application of the competitive need limitations in section 503(c)(2)(A) (19 U.S.C. 2463(c)(2)(A)) with respect to any eligible article from any beneficiary developing country if certain conditions are met.

3. Pursuant to section 503(d)(5) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2463(d)(5)), any waiver granted under section 503(d) shall remain in effect until the President determines that such waiver is no longer warranted due to changed circumstances.

4. Section 7(a) of the AGOA Acceleration Act of 2004 (Public Law 108–274) ("AGOA Acceleration Act") amended section 506A of the GSP (19 U.S.C. 2466a) to provide certain benefits to any country designated as a beneficiary sub-Saharan African country under section 506A(a) of the GSP that becomes a party to a free trade agreement with the United States, and amended section 506B of the GSP (19 U.S.C. 2466b) to extend the period during which preferential treatment may be accorded to such countries.

5. Section 7(b) through (f) of the AGOA Acceleration Act amended section 112 of the