

No, one of the key, important parts about this campaign for President is to make sure that we have a better tomorrow—we not only have a safer America, a stronger America, but a better America, that will enable each of our citizens to realize the God-given talents that they have been given. And it is possible to do so because this—America’s strength, true strength, important strength is in the hearts and souls of our citizens.

On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. It was an amazing day for me. I will remember—I remember clearly a guy in a hardhat as I was walking through the rubble, he said, “Don’t let me down,” and then people were shouting, “Whatever it takes.” That’s what they were shouting. And like we all did that day, I took it personally, what happened to America. I have a responsibility that goes on. I will never relent to bringing justice to our enemies. I will defend America, whatever it takes.

I am here to ask for your help because I understand the task ahead for the country. I see clearly where we need to go. We have a war to win, and the world is counting on us to spread freedom and peace. We have a duty to spread opportunity and hope to every part of this country. That is the work that history has set before us. We welcome it, and we know that for our country, the best days lie ahead.

Thank you for coming. May God bless you, and my God bless America. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:30 a.m. at a pancake breakfast at the Lucas County Recreation Center. In his remarks, he referred to Bernadette Restivo Noe, chairman, Lucas County Republican Party; Gov. Bob Taft of Ohio; Larry Kaczala, candidate for Congress in Ohio’s 9th Congressional District; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; and Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea.

Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session in Dayton, Ohio

May 4, 2004

The President. Thank you all. Please be seated. Mind if I take off my coat? I think I will. Listen, thank you all for coming. I’m thrilled to be here. I’m sorry I’m a little late.

I got a little windy up in Toledo. [Laughter] But I appreciate you coming by for what we call a conversation. I’m going to talk a little bit. Some fellow citizens here are going to talk a little bit about their lives, in order to better illustrate our vision for an America that is safer and stronger and better. And if we’ve got some time, I’ll answer some questions. Then I’ve got to get on the bus. [Laughter] The bus driver said, “If you talk too long, I’m pulling out of here.” [Laughter]

I’m here to let you know that I want to serve as your President for 4 more years. [Applause] Thank you all. And I want to tell you why. I’m here to explain the reason why. We’ve got a job to do, a job to make sure this country is as safe as it can be, as strong as it should be, and as compassionate as it will be.

I’m also here to let you know that I need your help, that I need your help in convincing your neighbors to register to vote, to do their duty as Americans to vote. And don’t be afraid to talk to people from the other party or people who may not be affiliated with any party, because our message is positive and optimistic and hopeful for every single American.

The good news is Laura W. Bush wants to serve for 4 more years as well. I regret she’s not here. I talked to her on the plane earlier this morning. She said to send her very best. She is a—I’m a lucky guy. She’s a great wife, a wonderful mother, and a fabulous First Lady of the United States. She’s come to recognize what I know about the job, is that we can make a difference in people’s lives, a positive difference. She is very much involved with encouraging teachers to teach, saying to people, “Look, if you’re looking for a second career, say, if you served in the military and you’re looking for something to do, get into the classroom and make a difference in some child’s life.” She understands the importance of reading. She was a public school librarian when I met her. She didn’t like politics, and she didn’t like politicians. [Laughter] Look where she is. [Laughter]

She can speak to freedom and the importance of freedom in societies like—she has the ability to speak to the women of Afghanistan like she did on a radio broadcast. Listen,

Laura understands what I know: It's a high privilege to serve the people of this country, and it's a fantastic opportunity to make the country as best as it can possibly be. She sends her best. She is—look, the best reason to put me back in there is so she's got 4 more years. *[Laughter]*

When you're out talking to your neighbors, remind them that I have put together a really good team to serve the country, people from all walks of life, men and women in positions of high responsibility, people from different backgrounds, people who are honorable citizens who have come to serve not their self-interest but to serve our country.

I got a great Vice President I'm running with in Dick Cheney. I remember being at a rally with my mother—Mother is still, you'll be happy to hear, a little feisty and outspoken at times. *[Laughter]* I said, "Dick Cheney is the finest Vice President our country has ever had." *[Laughter]* You can imagine what Mother said. *[Laughter]*

I appreciate Congressman Dave Hobson for being here today. Where are you, Big Dave? Thank you, sir. Glad you're here—a fine Member of the House, a strong ally, and a good man. Appreciate you coming, Dave. I want to thank Congressman Mike Turner. I see you, Mike. I'm proud you're here, Mike.

I know Jennette Bradley is with us, and Joe Deters, members of the State—there they go. Good to see you all. Thanks for coming, Governor and Joe. Majority Whip Jeff Jacobson and State Rep Jon Husted, where are you both? Oh, there they go. Thought you'd get a better seat than that. *[Laughter]* Sign up a few more volunteers. *[Laughter]*

Listen, I want to thank Bob Bennett, the Ohio party chairman. I want to thank all the grassroots activists that are here. I need your help. I'm going to say it again. I'm here really to say, let's get after it. I want to win. I want to do everything I can to make sure this country is as safe as it can possibly be, and that's my most solemn duty. It was a duty that came home loud and clear on September the 11th, 2001. My job is to rally our Government to protect Americans from harm.

And we're working hard to do so. We changed the whole attitude in Washington

about sharing intelligence between agencies, buttoning up the country as best as we possibly can. I think they're doing a darn good job at the airports. I know it's inconvenient, but it's all part of doing our duty to make this country secure. We have to be correct 100 percent of the time in order to protect America. The enemy has got to be right once, which really says that the best way to secure the homeland is to chase these killers down, one at a time, and bring them to justice.

I've got a plan to win the war on terror. We're making progress. We're not in this battle alone. First, just understand the nature of the war. Some say, "Well, this is just a matter of law enforcement and intelligence." No, that's not what it is. It's an issue that requires all our assets. It's an issue that requires the nature of the enemy if we're going to be able to solve the problem. These are coldblooded killers. They could care less about innocence or guilt. They have no conscience. There's no need to negotiate with them. You can't convince them of the error of their ways. This country must be strong and resolute, and we must never falter in the face of this enemy if we expect to secure the homeland.

It is essential that America lead through strength on this issue, lead by using all the assets we have at our disposal, not just some. It is important that when an American President speaks, he means what he says. It's important for the President to be clear in his language and resolute in the intention. That's when I said that—for example, when I said, "If you harbor a terrorist, you're just as guilty as the terrorist"—once you say that, you better be willing to act on it. We were willing to act on it, and now the Taliban is no longer in power in Afghanistan.

Part of the war on terror is chasing Al Qaida down, and about two-thirds of their known leaders have been brought to justice, which is positive. The rest of them know we're breathing down their neck. Part of the war is to make sure there's no safe haven. And so, by removing the Taliban out of Afghanistan and introducing democracy into this country, Al Qaida lost safe haven.

But something else happened that's incredibly important for particularly the young to understand. The Taliban were incredibly

barbaric people. They were so backward that many young girls never got to go to school. That's hard to envision, isn't it, for an American to say, "Gosh, what is it like to live in a country where young girls are denied an education?" But that's the way they were. So not only did we deny safe haven, not only did we do what we said we're going to do, but now young girls have a chance to succeed in Afghanistan, thanks to the United States of America and our friends and allies. We're liberators. We care deeply about human freedom and the human condition.

The President must always remember the lessons learned from September the 11th. And here's the lesson learned for this country, that when we see a threat, we cannot let it gather, that if we see a threat to our security, we can no longer hope it goes away. We can no longer say, "Gosh, maybe the tyrant will change his mind." We don't have that luxury anymore. September the 11th taught us that we must deal with threats before they fully materialize.

I saw a threat in Iraq and—by looking at the intelligence. Congress, by the way, looked at the same intelligence, the same intelligence I looked at. They saw a threat. The United Nations Security Council looked at the intelligence, and it saw a threat. The threat we saw was based upon not only the intelligence but based upon the prior behavior of Mr. Saddam Hussein, a person who clearly hated America. He's a person that had used weapons of mass destruction against his own people and against people in his neighborhood. He's a person that had terrorist ties. After all, he's the person that paid suiciders money to blow up innocent lives in the Middle East. He was a tyrant to his own people.

No, we saw a threat, and the United Nations Security Council, if you remember, said, "Disarm, or face serious consequences." That's what the U.N. Security Council said, with America's vote. When America says something, it better mean it. And so when we said, "Disarm," to Saddam Hussein, we meant it. He chose defiance once again. He refused to comply with the demands of the free world. Given his history, given the fact that he was a madman, I was faced with the choice of whether to take his word or defend America. I will defend America every time.

First of all, if any of you have a loved one in the military, I want to thank you for your patience and your understanding. And I want to thank them for their sacrifice and service.

The world is better off without Saddam Hussein in power, and so are the Iraqi people. They long to be free. They want to be free. Moms and dads in Iraq want to raise their children in a peaceful world. They want their children, just like we want our children, to grow up and realize dreams and aspirations. That's what they want. There's a few people there who are trying to stop the advance of freedom, and that's what we're facing.

It's tough work. It's been a hard couple of months for the American people. But I want you to know what I've told family members of—who have lost a loved one: Your son or daughter sacrificed for something incredibly important, which is freedom and peace. A free society in Iraq will lead to a more peaceful world. Not only have we removed a threat to America, but we now have a chance to spread freedom into a part of the world that is desperate for freedom. Free societies are peaceful societies. Free societies are hopeful societies. The long-term interest of this country, the long-term interest of the world revolve around whether or not we have the courage and the resolve and the determination to spread freedom in the Middle East, starting in Iraq. We have that resolve.

We have a plan. We have a plan to make Iraq more secure. Our troops will get what they need to do their job. Our troops will receive the help. And we have a plan to turn over sovereignty to the Iraqi—to an Iraqi entity. That's what we said we're going to do. When America speaks, it's got to mean what it says. Everybody is watching us—everybody is watching.

I love to tell the story about a dinner with Prime Minister Koizumi. Maybe this will help put this in perspective. Prime Minister Koizumi is the Prime Minister of Japan. And we were having dinner in Tokyo, and we were talking about how we can work together to make the world more peaceful, starting with how to make sure that the Korean Peninsula is peaceful by keeping pressure on Kim Chong-il not to develop a nuclear weapon. See, the mutual goal is not to—is to keep

the Korean Peninsula nuclear-weapons-free. That's important. You can imagine. Kim Chong-il is a tyrant. He's a danger. Here I was talking to the Prime Minister of a country that was at war with the United States, had attacked our country, and it dawned on me that if we had gotten it wrong after World War II, I might not have been having this conversation about how to keep the peace. Also during the conversation, I realized that when we get it right in Iraq—and we will—when Iraq is free, someday an American President will be having the discussion with the duly elected official of Iraq about how to work together to bring peace in a troubled region of the world.

What we're doing is historic in nature. We have a chance to change the world for the better. We have a chance to spread freedom in parts of the world that are desperate for freedom. And as a result, America will have short-term security and long-term security.

Let me tell you something about freedom. It's a cornerstone of our foreign policy. One of the reasons I believe I need to be your President for 4 more years is because I understand 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, and we have an obligation—[*applause*]. Thank you all.

A stronger America is also important for our future. I have a vision, a clear vision, as to how to keep our country strong. It starts with making sure the economy is strong, and I've got to tell you, I'm one optimistic fellow about our economy. And the reason why is I know what we have overcome. We've overcome a lot.

Think about what this country has been through in the last 3 years. We've been through a recession that started in early 2001. That means we were going backwards. It's hard to be a worker in an industry that has been beset by recession. It's hard to be a small-business owner if you're worried about the future. It was a negative period of time.

We started overcoming that, and the enemy hit us, and that hurt our economy too. It not only changed how we've got to view the world; it hurt our economy. It just did.

And then we started coming out of that, and we realized there were some citizens in

our country who forgot what it meant to be responsible citizens. In other words, they didn't tell the truth. We had some corporate wrongdoers. We had a corporate scandal that shook our confidence. When you can't believe the numbers you're reading, if you're an investor or a worker, an employee, or an officer, it shakes your confidence about the American system. We dealt with it. We passed tough laws and made it clear we're not going to tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of America.

As well the march to war in Iraq affected capital markets and affected the optimism of the country. Imagine seeing on your TV screens the words "March to War." "America is marching to war." And if you're a planner or a small-business owner or somebody looking for work, it's a pretty negative environment in which to be making decisions. No, marching to war is not a positive thought. We're now marching to peace, and yet, we've overcome all those obstacles in a short period of time.

This economy of ours today is strong, and it's getting stronger. And the question is, how do we keep it strong as we go into the next decade. I say it's strong—first quarter growth was 4.2 percent. That's strong. That's good. Well, I say it's strong—we increased jobs nationwide by 308,000 in the month of March. New jobs here in Ohio are increasing in the month of March. I say it's strong—today there's a report out that showed that factory orders is up by 4.3 percent, the largest order increase in 2 years. In other words, there's indication after indication—it's strong. More people—the homeownership rate is the highest it's ever been in our Nation's history. That's good. We want more people owning something. This administration understands that if you own something, if you own your business, if you own your home, you're going to have a vital interest in the future of this country.

No, the indications are good. There are still people who hurt, and I understand that. There are people in parts of Ohio who haven't felt the recovery yet, but we're getting better. And we've got to make sure we have pro-growth policies. I'm running because I want to make sure the pro-growth agenda doesn't get disrupted.

What do you mean by that? Well, I believe strongly that one of the reasons why this economy is as strong as it is, is because we cut taxes, because the more people—we're going to hear from some couples in a minute about what—a couple—about what it meant to cut taxes. But we cut taxes. Let me tell you, when you have more money in your pocket, it generally increases demand for a good or a service. And when demand goes up, somebody is going to meet that good or a service, which means somebody is more likely to have a job or to find work. That's what that means. It was an important part—I like to tell people that this economic growth we're seeing is the result of tax relief—partially because of tax relief, and it shows that the American people are spending their money far better than the Federal Government would have.

Some in Washington don't like that rhetoric. They think the Federal Government can spend it better than you can. That's just a difference of opinion. You better be careful in a campaign if somebody starts promising spending. Heck, we've got 6 months to go, and the fellow I'm running against is already over a trillion dollars in new programs. We're counting them up. He says he's going to pay for it by tax on the rich. You can't tax the rich enough to pay for all his promises. So guess who's going to pay? You're going to pay. And we're not going to let him do that, though. That would be terrible for the economy. The American people don't need a tax increase.

The question is, who has got the vision to make sure this country is the strongest economic nation in the world? I'm going to argue I do. See, the way to make sure we're strong and people can find work is to make sure this is the best place to do business in the world; this is the best place for people to risk capital; this is the best place for people to realize their dreams by starting their own business. That's what this campaign is about in the future—means we better get tort reform, better make sure that we do not have frivolous or junk lawsuits that make it difficult for people to be able to make a living.

And that includes medical liability reform. In order to make sure that we can grow our economy, in order to make sure people are

able to feel comfortable about expanding their job base, we've got to do something about the cost of health care. Frivolous and junk lawsuits run up the cost of health care. They make health care more—less affordable and less accessible. The Congress needs to act. You need a President who is willing to push for medical liability reform in Washington, DC.

We need to continue to promote health savings accounts, which make sure that customers and docs have got the—patients and docs have got the proper relationship. We want the patient-doctor relationship to be the center of decisionmaking in health care, not Federal bureaucracy. We want to promote association health care plans to make sure small businesses are able to better afford health care.

Listen, the vision has got to be to make sure this is a good place to do business and that the ingredients are available for the entrepreneurial spirit to be strong. That's why we need an energy plan. We don't have an energy plan. It's stuck in the United States Congress.

We need a plan that promotes alternative sources of energy. Look, I'd love to be the President someday to be able to say, "The corn crop is good. Therefore, we're less dependent on foreign sources of energy." I'd like to be able to grow energy, but it's going to take a while to get the research and development to kick in.

We need alternative sources of energy. We need to promote clean coal technology. We need to use the resources we've got. We ought to be exploring for more natural gas at home. We ought to be using our technology to encourage the spread of safe nuclear power. We ought to be on all fronts, making sure we—but my point is this—my point is this: We can encourage conservation; we can encourage reliable supplies of energy; and we must do so to become less dependent on foreign sources of energy. If we expect to be competitive, we've got to have an energy plan.

Two other things I want to talk about right quick. One is, there's a lot of talk about trade. I'm going to tell you something: I need to be President to reject economic isolationism from taking hold in America. We should not

isolate ourselves from the world. That would be bad for workers. It would be bad for long-term economic growth.

Presidents before me have made the decision to open up our markets so consumers benefit from trade. You see, if you're a consumer here in America and you've got different options from which to choose, you're generally going to get better price and better quality. That's the way the economy works. But what hasn't happened is, foreign markets haven't opened up like ours have.

The message I give to the American people is, in order for us to grow our job base and to stay competitive and stay strong, is for us not to fear competition but to welcome it, so long as there's a level playing field. We can compete with anybody. Our workers are productive. Our farmers and ranchers are great. Our high-tech industry is imaginative and strong. The policy of Government ought to be to open up new markets for American entrepreneurs and businesspeople and farmers and ranchers. We can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere.

Government must put good policy in place that encourages the spread of innovative technology. My dream is for everybody in America to have broadband technology in their home by the year 2007. This is—broadband technology, if done right, is going to revolutionize education and health care. It will make this society more entrepreneurial, make the people of America more productive. It's a great way—a great opportunity. We had a good break. The Senate passed a moratorium on access taxes to broadband. My view is there ought to be not any taxes on broadband. If you want it to spread across the country, don't tax it. Plus we've got to get rid of regulatory hurdles so that it spreads around. Innovative society—an innovative society is one that's necessary for us to compete, but there are problems with an innovative society. We're going to talk a little bit about the opportunities and the challenges that an innovative society provides.

Let me put it to you this way: Technology races through our economy, and it makes us more competitive. There are new ideas, but workers lag. Some industries are old. Some new industries spring up. But the transition

from the old industry to the new industry is a difficult transition for many of our workers. We will not be a productive leader in the world if we don't get our education systems right.

On the one hand, we've got to make sure our youngsters learn to read and write and add and subtract early, before it is too late. And that's why the No Child Left Behind Act that I had the honor of signing is a really good start. We're challenging the soft bigotry of low expectations. We're shutting down this business of simply shuffling kids through the system. We're making sure they learn to read early, before it's too late, and they're getting help if they need help. We're going to raise the bar. We're going to make sure every child from every background gets as good an education as possible.

But you've got to also understand there are workers in this world who are working for companies that—where the job base is dwindling. And yet, there are also jobs in the neighborhood, and we need to use the community college system in a wise way to make sure that we train people for the jobs of the 21st century. We'll talk about this in a minute. But what I'm telling you about—a vision that understands America's role in the world is one that says, "Education is the cornerstone—practical education to make sure the workers get the training they need to be productive workers as our economy transition to the 21st-century economy."

Finally, let me tell you about how to make America a better place. The President has got to understand the proper role between Government and compassion—between—the proper role between Government and the strength of the country. The strength of this country is the hearts and souls of the American citizens. That's our strength.

The Government is not a loving organization. I'm sure there's loving people in Government. I'm one. *[Laughter]* But Government, itself, is not loving. Government is law and justice. Love comes when somebody—a soul says, "What can I do to make my community a better place? What can I do to mentor a child? What can I do to love my neighbor just like I'd like to be loved myself?" I need to be President for 4 more years to rally that spirit, to call upon that great strength

of America so our society changes, one heart, one soul, one conscience at a time.

Let me talk a little bit about some of the people I've had the honor of meeting. I met the Berkeys, Kim and Becky. They're with us today. Kim is a cargo handler at Menlo Forwarding. Is that right?

Kim Berkey. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Yes. And Becky is with him, his wife. They—they're a tax—I call them a tax family. The reason why is because they saved money, \$1,900, from the tax cut. That's \$1,900 of their own money they get to keep, not like the Government—and it's 1,900 this year too.

See, we raised the child credit to \$1,000, which helped people raise families. It's an important part of the tax relief. We reduced the marriage penalty. We got a Tax Code that penalizes marriage. It seems to me it sends the wrong signal. We ought to be encouraging marriage and family, not penalizing marriage.

They saved \$1,900. It's a lot of money to them—at least that's what they told me. If Congress doesn't act, there's going to be a tax increase on these folks. It doesn't make any sense, does it, to be raising taxes on them at this point when the economy begins to grow. And \$1,900, it gives them more money to pay down credit. It gives them more money to take care of their family.

Is that right? What did you do with all that money?

Mr. Berkey. Well, mostly we used it just to pay off some bills, much like most of our friends, because raising a family is very expensive nowadays. I brought my three children, and as you can see, just feeding them guys took most of that \$800. [*Laughter*]

The President. Good-looking family you got there. Thanks for coming.

If they don't move—Congress doesn't move, they're going to have an increase of about \$900 taxes. I don't know what that would do to you. I'm not a lawyer, but that's a leading question, isn't it? [*Laughter*] Go ahead. Speak up, Mom.

Becky Berkey. Any kind of an increase is just going to make things tighter. You know, I like to have the money here.

The President. See, we've got money in Washington. We just have to set our prior-

ities. I've laid out a plan to cut this deficit in half in 5 years, but Congress is going to have to be careful about how they spend your money. It's a plan that prioritizes the military, prioritizes defending the homeland, but it's a plan that says to Congress, you know, "Be wise about using the people's money." I don't have to worry about these two Congressmen. They're wise about the money.

But we don't need to be taking money out of these people's pockets, see? We don't need a bunch of promisers in Washington, DC, who say, "Well, I better fulfill my promise by taxing these good folks." It's not only bad for them; it's bad for the overall economy. Taking \$900 out of their pocket affects the economy. And we're beginning to grow, and it requires—what this Nation needs is a person who understands how economies grow. Governments don't make economies grow. People make economies grow, and these people need to get their money.

Thank you all for coming.

When you're talking to your friends and neighbors about the tax rhetoric, remind them that an essential part of a vibrant economy is the small-business sector. Seventy percent of new jobs are created by small-business owners in America. That's pretty good, isn't it? So if you're worried about job creation in Ohio, you better stay focused on small-business owners.

And we've got an owner with us. Dave Dysinger owns his own business. Isn't that exciting to hear, "I own"—can you imagine saying, "I own my own business?" It's exciting words for the entrepreneur, "I own my business—it's my business." He owns his. And I just want to—you've just got to tell your neighbors the truth about the tax relief. When you cut rates, overall rates for everybody, you're really affecting small business, because most small businesses are sole proprietorships or Subchapter S corporations. So when you hear people say, "I'm going to tax the rich," really what they're saying—they may try to tax the rich. The rich generally have good accountants so they don't get taxed much, and the small businesses will take the brunt of the tax-the-rich scheme. And that hurts our economy.

Dave, tell us about your business.

[*Dave Dysinger, president, Dysinger, Inc., Dayton, OH, made brief remarks, concluding as follows.*]

Mr. Dysinger. We are back in a growth cycle. We're up to 21 employees now. We expect to hire 10 more and 20 next year.

The President. There you go.

Mr. Dysinger. So we're moving.

The President. We care about outsourcing in America. We want people working here, but the wrong policy would have been, "Let's go through economic isolationist policy. Let's wall us off from the world." Instead, the right policy was to stimulate growth at home.

See, he's helping make my point. My point is, let us be confident about ourselves. Let's put the right policies in place that encourage growth at home. Here's a fellow that—his business dropped, and it's now on the up-swing. Did you notice he said he's going to hire 10 people this year? There's a lot of Daves in America. There's a lot of small businesses who are feeling the way he's feeling. Seventy percent of new jobs are created by the small-business sector of the economy, and you just heard an entrepreneur say 10 this year, 15 next year? Twenty next year?

Mr. Dysinger. Twenty next year.

The President. Do I hear 25?

Mr. Dysinger. I hope.

The President. Not yet. I want Dave to explain his investment strategy. Are you going to make any investments?

Mr. Dysinger. Yes, to make room for the people, we're going to have to add facility, so we expect to double our facility size this year. And we need to buy—we're going to buy some used machinery and some new machinery. We expect to spend probably \$2 million over the next 12 months.

The President. Right. Let me tell you about the connection between what he just said—and by the way, part of his decision-making was because he's optimistic about expanding. I suspect part of his decisionmaking had to do with the bonus depreciation you got in the tax bill. In other words, there was an incentive to encourage people to invest.

Mr. Dysinger. That's right.

The President. Yes, see. That's a leading question. I already knew the answer. But let me—[*laughter*—but the reason I bring that

up is that when you hear Dave say he's going to buy some equipment or invest, somebody has got to make the equipment. In other words, he said, "I want to—I'm increasing demand for equipment." And somebody is going to respond to his demand, and when they make the equipment, somebody has got to be employed to do so. And if the person making the equipment has got more orders than the previous year, it may mean that he is expanding as well.

So here is Dave saying, "I'm expanding. I need to invest." The person who he is buying from also may be now in a position to—and that's how the economy works. It starts with influencing the decision—in this case, of a small-business entrepreneur—by good tax policy, and I think it happens to be good economic policy to be optimistic and confident about our future. And it's his decision, not the Government's decision. It's his decision that stimulates further economic growth and vitality.

I want to thank you for being an entrepreneur. I wish you all the best in your business.

Mr. Dysinger. I'd like to thank you also. The fact is, I'm proud and grateful to be an American. And I am very thankful for the leadership you bring to us here in these hard times.

The President. Thank you, sir. [*Applause*] Thank you all. Thank you all. Let me—thanks. Thanks a lot, Dave. I'm glad I invited you. [*Laughter*]

I mentioned the role of community colleges. We've got a plan called the Jobs for the 21st Century, and an integral part of that is to make sure the Workforce Investment Act actually gets money to people who are looking for work. And a key component of a job strategy has got to be to rely upon your asset base. And we've got a great asset base at the community colleges. Community colleges are flexible. They're affordable. They're available. And the thing I love about community colleges, when they're run right, they're able to match employer demand with employees that want to work. In other words, they're able to train somebody for jobs which actually exist. And part of our focus is to empower community colleges to enter collaborative efforts with local employers.

If you happen to be on the chamber of commerce, by the way, and you've got a community college around, use it to attract industry. People want to make sure they've got trained workers. Use your community colleges.

We've got Steve Johnson with us. You probably think I'm going to pick him because he got his Ph.D. from the University of Texas. No, that's not why we got him. We got him because he's running Sinclair Community College in Dayton, Ohio.

My fellow Texan—no—tell us about your community college.

[*Steven Lee Johnson, president, Sinclair Community College, made brief remarks.*]

The President. What he's telling you is, is that—notice he mentioned Dave's name. He is available to design a curriculum that helps Dave and, at the same time, helps the workers.

One of the interesting areas—one of the things I find around the country is that there's great demand in the health care field in America today. In other words, old jobs are being replaced by new jobs.

Is that the case here or not?

Dr. Johnson. That's the case. In fact, a lot of the support that Sinclair has received over the years from Federal grants, National Science Foundation, Department of Labor grants, Department of Education grants, has allowed us to revamp and overhaul our curriculum, has allowed us to put in technology training programs that are for today and for tomorrow.

The President. Yes. The Federal Government helps. It sets priorities. You know, there's displaced workers—money to help displaced workers. If a community gets hit hard by a layoff, there's money available to help the community colleges train people for jobs which exist. Part of the problem we have in America is there are jobs that are available, and people just aren't trained to meet them.

The other interesting thing about our country and the economy today and where the community colleges provide a very important role is that we're becoming a more productive society. In other words, there's the premium on being a productive worker, which requires different kinds of skill sets

than you had in the past. In other words, envision going from the shovel to the backhoe. You had to learn how to drive the backhoe, and when you did, you were incredibly more productive than you were with a shovel. It's that same equivalent that's taking place throughout our economy right now. We're in a time of transition, and community colleges help workers become more productive.

But productivity increases for a worker means higher pay. The more productive a society you are, the more your standard of living goes up. And so one of the things that we're going to talk about here in a minute is how a particular individual can become more productive through going to the community college and then enhance her standard of living.

Have you got anything else you want to offer, Steve?

Dr. Johnson. Just one other thing, President Bush—

The President. I thought you had something on the tip of your tongue.

Dr. Johnson. I just have one thing. You know how we are. I just want to say that you are very—we really appreciate your support of community colleges and of Sinclair Community College. And you are very complimentary, and you do know—I want to point out that it's the community leaders in this room that built Sinclair Community College, maintain Sinclair Community College. And that's the story across America, local leaders building colleges to serve the needs of today and tomorrow.

The President. Yes, and that's the way it should be, by the way. The Federal Government can help on targeted assistance. We can help with collaborative efforts, but like public schools, community colleges need to be run by the local folks. You don't want to Federalize education.

Thank you.

Ready? Okay, I want you to hear, I think, an amazing story. Nancy Scott is with us. Nancy, thank you for coming. Mother of three—I think she's got the toughest job in America. She's a single mother of three. That's hard work. Nancy, tell us what you did, where you went to school, and what you're doing, please.

[*Nancy Scott made brief remarks.*]

The President. Okay, let me stop you. I know you're just getting wound up, and there's nothing worse than—[*laughter*]. She goes back to school. First of all, Government can't make Nancy Scott go back to school. She's got to want to succeed, herself. She has a great spirit.

There's help available. Pell grants are important. I'm a big supporter of Pell grants. It makes sense to help people go back to school.

And the third thing that you just heard her say is her income doubled. In other words, she became a more productive worker. She gained new skills, skills that are more applicable to the 21st-century jobs that are now being created, and her income doubled. People have got to understand that helping a worker become more productive not only helps fill jobs but, more importantly, helps the worker and her family, in this case, to double her income.

Go ahead.

Ms. Scott. I would just like to add that, other than that, my family and friends here and in New York are praying for you, Mr. President.

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

Ms. Scott. And we stand behind you.

The President. Thanks a lot. I'm honored. Thank you for coming. I appreciate you.

That's—isn't that a fabulous story? See, that's the story of the 21st century. We need to continue stories like this as we—as our economy changes. There are a lot of people like Nancy who want to meet their obligations and their responsibilities and want to be helped so they can become productive. I love the story of Nancy Scott. I meet people like that all the time. The community college is an essential part of making sure that we're competitive in the future by enabling our workers, who are the best in the world, to have the skills necessary to compete. That's what we're talking about.

Let me—I'm fixing to go to—fixing to get on the bus. I do want to answer some questions before I get out of here. Here's your chance.

Yes, ma'am.

Support for Troops in Iraq

Q. Yes—my husband is serving in Iraq—

The President. Your husband is in Iraq now?

Q. Right.

The President. Thank you. What's he doing?

Q. He's with the civil affairs, and he supports you 100 percent for being there. And I support you, and his family supports you for being there. My question is, is there any plans of getting out the personnel vehicles from the Vietnam era to help with the protection from the—until the Humvees get—

The President. Yes.

Q. —for their—protection for the soldiers?

The President. Right. The plan is to continue to upgrade the Humvees and to bring in more Strykers. Look, I want you to know—and, first of all, thank your husband. But I want our troops to have the very best. This—you hear—this is politics. It's kind of a political season, so you hear things that—people say things like we don't want our soldiers to have the best. But we put an \$87 billion supplemental out there. A big chunk of that money was to make sure we upgraded the equipment our soldiers were getting to make them safe. That's a lot of money. It takes a while to get the Kevlar vests, the latest Kevlar vests manufactured. We're distributing it. I supported the 67 billion for the troops—87 billion overall.

I want to remind you what my opponent said about that. [*Laughter*] He said he voted for the 87 billion, right before he voted against it. [*Laughter*] Look, we just need strong support for our troops. And I have a solemn duty to say to you as clearly as I can, we will do the very best we possibly can to make your loved one safe. That's what we owe the family members, and that's what we owe the troops.

Yes, sir.

Education

Q. Mr. President, I consider it a great honor to be here today to be with you. I am a retired educator, and as you know, many of the people in my profession profess to be

very opposed to the things that the Republicans are proposing. And I made a comment here earlier today to some friends that if the educators will speak the truth, the real truth, we can teach every child and not leave them behind. But it takes not just money. It takes the backing of the family. It takes backing of the school. It takes backing of everyone to make that child want to learn, and it's not dollars that's going to pull him out, the way the NEA says it is.

So as the retired principal of West Carrollton Junior High School, I support your plan 100 percent, and I know many, many educators that support it as well. They're not all on the side of the NEA.

The President. Well, I appreciate you. Thanks for being in education. Thank you.

Let me say something. Look, the key is that we use curriculum that works. The key is that we encourage our teachers. The key is we don't federalize public schools. The key is, where we find failure, we address it. In order to address failure, you've got to figure it out in the first place. That's why measuring is so important.

There was a big battle over measuring when I was Governor of Texas. There's a battle over measuring when it comes to Federal dollars. People don't want to measure—some people don't. How do you know, if you don't measure? How can you tell whether a child is just being shuffled through the system, unless you're willing to say, "See if you can read?" Early, by the way—you've got to test early to determine whether or not a child has got the skills necessary to become a productive citizen, which is reading. And if you find there's a deficiency, we've got money in the budget to correct it early, before it's too late.

The whole cornerstone of the No Child Left Behind Act is this great sense of possibility for every child. If you do not believe every child can learn to read and write, then you say it's okay not to measure. If you believe every child can learn to read and write, you want to measure to determine if they can. And if so, you reward the schools that are meeting expectations, and if not, you change. [Applause] I appreciate that.

Request for Autograph

Q. Mr. President, would you please sign this? [Laughter]

The President. Yes. In a minute. [Laughter]

Yes, sir.

Steel Prices

Q. The question is, due to your administration, our business has turned around phenomenally. The last 2 months have been record months, but where we're taking a hit at is the steel industry. The prices are skyrocketing.

The President. Yes. Well, I understand. And the reason why is because the world is recovering. You see, when demand—worldwide demand was depressed for steel because there was slowness in the world, there was an oversupply. And what's happened is, is that demand has outstripped supply because countries like China are now demanding more steel. They're beginning to grow. The whole world is beginning to grow. The United States is beginning to grow.

And I understand the pressures. Obviously, in a market-oriented world, which I believe the world should be, there will be price-driven expansion. In other words, there will be more steel producers or more steel coming on to meet the increased demand. And I understand what you're going through, but just remember, it wasn't all that long ago that the price of steel was at the bottom end of the pricing structure. And we're going through a cycle now because the world is expanding. Our exports are up, by the way. We want the world to expand. We want there to be prosperity around the world. It makes—it gives us a better chance to sell what we make into other markets.

And so I understand where you're coming from. And I guess what I'm telling you is there's cyclical in the economy, particularly when it comes to steel pricing.

Yes? Go ahead and bring that plate over here. I can listen and sign at the same time.

Yes, ma'am.

The Presidency

Q. My name is Erica Keene. I'm 8 years old. And what's the funnest thing to be—about being President? [Laughter]

The President. The funnest thing is this: Making decisions that make the world a better place. I've got to make a lot of decisions—some of them you'll see, and some of them you don't see—which means that in order to make good decisions, you better know what you believe; you better stand on principle.

Secondly, in order to make good decisions, I've got to listen to smart people. I like to be around smart, intelligent, capable people. I like to walk into a room full of people like Condi Rice or Dick Cheney or Don Rumsfeld or Colin Powell.

I like to tell people the Oval Office is a powerful place. People will stand outside the Oval Office, and they say, "I can't wait to get in there and tell him what for." And then they open the door, and they walk in this majestic shrine to democracy, and they're overwhelmed by the atmosphere. And they say, "Man, you're looking beautiful, Mr. President"—[laughter]—which means you better have people around you who tell you the truth. [Laughter]

A decisionmaker must be willing to listen, must be willing to count on others to give good, solid advice. As you go out and gather the vote, remind people I've put together a really fantastic team of citizens. And they're good and honest folks who are smart and capable.

No, the best thing about this job is making decisions that I think will influence the world and the country in positive ways.

Let me talk to you real quick about history. I don't think a President, if he does big things, will be around to see the history of his administration. Oh, yes, there will be the subjective history. There will be the political history. There will be the short-term history about an administration. But you won't be able to see the big things that have changed, the momentum of freedom in parts of the world that's desperate for freedom or a cultural change in the country, to see the ultimate effects of a cultural change from one that—a culture that 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 understands we're responsible for the decisions we make in life.

So the idea—the best part of this job is to set in motion big changes of history. It's unbelievably exciting to be in a position to do that. That's why I want to be the President for 4 more years. I see clearly where I want to lead the country. I see the obligations we have as a great nation. We have an obligation, where we see tyranny and slavery, to act. I don't mean militarily. I mean using our influence to free people. We have the obligation to free people from tyranny, and we have the obligation to free people from disease. One of the things this country has done that I'm incredibly proud of is we're leading the fight against HIV/AIDS on the continent of Africa, for example. It is an incredibly important mission for this great and compassionate country.

Yes. You've written this question down. That's dangerous.

Q. Yes, but that's because I'm a little nervous.

The President. Okay, well, don't worry. It's just the President and a huge press corps. [Laughter]

Q. First of all, I want to say I'm very honored to be here with you today. I brought my wife and my daughter with me.

The President. Good. How old is the daughter? I'll just try—I'm trying to get you relaxed.

Q. My daughter is 14. She's right here.

The President. Do not introduce a 14-year-old daughter. I keep telling you. [Laughter]

Q. My daughter—my wife, Debbie, is over here.

The President. Hi, Debbie. How are you? How is he doing so far? Okay, good.

President's Faith/2004 Election

Q. First of all, Mr. President, thank you. I want to thank you for being a man of faith. And as a fellow—[applause].

The President. Thank you. Okay. He may have a question back there. [Laughter]

Q. Wow. Anyhow, as a fellow man of faith, how has the faith, first, affected you as a man? How has your faith affected you as President? And further, how do you think faith will affect the outcome of the 2004 election? Thank you.

The President. Yes. That's a good question. First, let me make this abundantly clear to you: The job of the President is to promote a society in which people are free to worship as they see fit. A valuable and cherished tradition of America is that you can worship an Almighty if you want to, and you're just as patriotic if you choose not to, that if you choose to worship, you can worship any religion that you choose. My job is to make sure that that is an absolute part of the American society in future.

From an individual perspective, as a person, I rely upon faith to give me the strength necessary to do my job. One of the interesting parts of the job, something that I discovered as President, is the fact that a lot of people pray for me. That's a very humbling thought when you think about little old me. People pray for George W. and his family. I don't ask. People just do, and for that I'm grateful, incredibly grateful. I believe in prayer, and I appreciate the prayers of people.

I think the 2004 election will be determined by the American people's decision as to who best can lead the country. That's what I think will determine the 2004 election. I think it's the collective will of the people which make that determination. Some people of faith will participate. Some who don't necessarily agree with faith will participate. The question of the outcome of the race is who best can describe as clearly as possible a positive and hopeful and optimistic future for every single citizen of this country regardless of their political party, regardless of their background, regardless of their economic status. That's what I think will determine the outcome of this election.

Yes, little guy way up there. My favorite dog is Barney. *[Laughter]* That wasn't your question, okay. I think this is going to have to be the last question. I know, I'm sorry. Come on down the road to Lebanon. *[Laughter]*

The Presidency

Q. Mr. President, do you like your job? And is it difficult at times?

The President. Yes. I love my job, and that's why I want to do it for 4 more years. I believe that—a lot of jobs are tough, but

that's what makes them worthwhile. My job is the kind of job that you better know who you are and where you're going in order to do it the right way. You can't kind of fumble around with your value system on the people's time. You've got to be rock solid in what you believe.

I tease and say I'm listening to my mother, as the President. Well, that's part of what it means to be rock solid in your values. You get raised a certain way, and that's just the way you are. And you show up, and you do your job. You tell people what you think, make the best decisions you can possibly make. You just can't worry about politics. I'm worried—I am in the political arena. I'm obviously anxious about this election; otherwise, I wouldn't be here asking for the vote. I'm anxious for it to get started. I like to campaign. I like to be with people. But I'm not going to change. I'm not going to change my principles. I'm not going to change my value system in order to win the vote.

I want to thank you all for coming. May God bless. Thank you all. Thanks for being here. Yes. Thanks, everybody. Glad you're here.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:32 p.m. at the Hara Complex. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Gov. Jennette Bradley and State Treasurer Joseph T. Deters of Ohio; Ohio State Senator Jeff Jacobson; Ohio State Representative Jon Husted; Robert T. Bennett, chairman, Ohio Republican Party; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; and Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea.

Remarks in Lebanon, Ohio

May 4, 2004

Thank you all for coming. I'm proud to be the first sitting President to have visited here. I am—actually, I'm a standing President today. *[Laughter]*

I'll tell you why I'm here. I want to—I'm here to tell you I want to be your President for 4 more years. I see clearly where we need to go in order to make this country safer and stronger and better, and I need your help. I need you to find people to register to vote. I need you to turn out the vote. I need you to put up the signs. I need you to do your