

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 that requires firm resolve, clear vision, and a deep faith in the values that make this a great nation.

None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began. I certainly won't. I was there in the ruins of the Twin Towers on September the 14th, 2001. The workers there—I can still hear them—were chanting at me, “Whatever it takes.” I was doing my best to console folks who had just come out of the rubble. A guy grabbed me by the arm. He looked me straight in the eye and said, “You do not let me down.” Ever since that day, I wake up trying to figure out how best to protect our country. I will defend the security of America, whatever it takes.

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

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

God bless. Thanks for coming. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:03 p.m. at the Bangor International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Senator Zell Miller of Georgia, who made the keynote address at the Republican National Convention; Peter Cianchette, Maine State chairman, and Jim Tobin, New England regional chairman, Bush-Cheney '04, Inc.; Brian Hamel, candidate for Congress in Maine's 2d Congressional District; Charlie Summers, candidate for Congress in Maine's 1st Congressional District; country music entertainer Mark Wills; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Prime Minister Ayad Allawi of the Iraqi Interim Government; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Remarks to Army Reservists and National Guard Troops Departing for Iraq From Bangor

September 23, 2004

The President. I want to thank you all very much.

Troops. Hooah!

The President. I appreciate your service to the country. I appreciate being in the presence of such fine men and women. May God bless you all. May God keep you safe. May God bless America as well. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:47 p.m. aboard a World Airlines plane at the Air National Guard Base at Bangor International Airport. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on Congressional Passage of Legislation To Extend Tax Relief

September 23, 2004

The tax relief I worked with Congress to pass is putting more money into the hands of the American people and helping to grow our economy. As the economy strengthens, the last thing hard-working American families need is a tax increase. I commend the Members of Congress for acting to extend marriage penalty relief, the \$1,000 child tax credit, and the broader 10-percent individual tax rate—which would otherwise expire this year and raise taxes on nearly 94 million Americans. This legislation will give families and small businesses added certainty and keep us on the path to greater prosperity, and it brings us one step closer to making the tax relief permanent.

Message on the Observance of Yom Kippur, 5765

September 23, 2004

“The Lord, the Lord God is gracious and compassionate, patient, abounding in kindness and faithfulness, assuring love for a thousand generations, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, and granting pardon.”

Exodus: 34:6–7

On Yom Kippur, Jews around the world gather to mark the holiest day of the year, the Sabbath of Sabbaths. Jewish tradition teaches that on this day, we receive God's mercy through acts of atonement, prayer, and charity. During this season of prayer and intense reflection, may you find comfort in

God's promise, which has never been broken and which is renewed in our time.

Our trust in God gives all Americans great purpose. As we are called to acts of compassion and mercy, we come closer to God and serve a cause greater than ourselves. May you trust God's faithfulness to all people, and may you be blessed with a good and happy New Year.

George W. Bush

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Remarks on Departure for Janesville, Wisconsin

September 24, 2004

Relief Efforts for Beslan, Russia

The President. Listen, thank you all for coming. The barbaric terrorist attack on a Russian school 3 weeks ago sickened the world. America grieves with the people of Russia, and we pray for the innocent victims and their families in Beslan.

In America, we've witnessed an outpouring of compassion for the Russian people. Today I'm joined by Sue Huddle and her students from John Quincy Adams Elementary School in Washington, DC. Thank you all for coming. They helped organize a toy and school supply drive for the children of Beslan.

Kelsey O'Marra is here too. She is a seventh grader at Connelly School of the Holy Child in Potomac, Maryland. She helped lead a school fundraiser to help the victims of Beslan. Kelsey, thank you for your leadership and your compassion.

These children show the sympathy and compassion and generosity of our whole Nation. I'm also joined by Marty Evans, the President of the American Red Cross. Thanks for coming, Marty.

Marty Evans. Yes, sir.

The President. The Red Cross is working hard to make sure the people in Beslan get the help they need. Red Cross and Red Crescent societies around the world have already received \$680,000 in donations for aid to Russia, enough to provide emergency medical care and counseling for 2,000 people. I

want to thank Marty for her leadership and her tireless efforts. I thank all Americans who have contributed to this important cause. I hope many more will donate in the days ahead.

I'm also honored to be with the Ambassador from Russia, Yuriy Ushakov. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador, for coming. He's here with the children from the Russian Embassy School. Earlier this month, I went to the Russian Embassy to express my condolences on behalf of the American people. The atrocities in Beslan reinforce the need for free nations to work together for peace and security. All Americans stand with the people of Russia in this wake of tragedy. We will stand with them as they rebuild, just like we stand with the people of Florida.

Another storm is headed in that direction. It will be another test of will and compassion. I know the Red Cross is ready, and I want to thank the Red Cross for being ready to help the citizens of that beleaguered State one more time. We extend our prayers to the people down there. We hope for the very best. The Federal Government, the armies of compassion stand ready to help.

Thank you all for coming. Thank you for your compassion. May God bless the people of Russia and the United States. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:57 a.m. on the South Portico at the White House.

Remarks in a Discussion on Education in Janesville

September 24, 2004

The President. Thank you all for coming. Thanks for coming. I'm proud you're here. I appreciate you coming. Please be seated. Please be seated. We've got a little work to do. I'm here to tell you why I'm running for President again. First, I'm here to tell you I'm asking for your vote and your support.

I'm really pleased to be back in the State of Wisconsin. It's a fabulous place you got here. What a wonderful State. The people are kind and generous and hardworking. It's—Laura and I love coming. Speaking about Laura, I wish she were here with me. No, I know, she's out campaigning. A lot of