

Remarks in Charlotte, North Carolina
October 24, 2002

Thank you all for coming. I'm glad to be back in North Carolina, and thanks for such a warm welcome. I want to talk about some things that are important. I want to talk about the future of this great country. We've got some tough tasks ahead of us. No question in my mind, we can accomplish anything we set our mind to. We're the greatest nation on the face of the Earth.

I want to talk to you about how to make our country safer, stronger, and better. And one way to do so is to send Elizabeth Dole to the United States Senate. There is no question in my mind, she is the right person for the job for North Carolina.

The senior Senator from North Carolina is retiring after a lot of good years of service to our country. I admire his service—no finer gentleman in the United States Senate. He represented North Carolina well. He's a credit to our country. And the right person to follow Senator Jesse Helms is soon-to-be Senator Elizabeth Dole.

She married well, and so did I. The truth of the matter is, Senator Dole—the male Senator Dole—and I married above ourselves. Laura sends her best. I just talked to her on the phone. She's on our—she wishes she could be here. She's on our ranch in Texas. It's been raining, so she needs to sweep the porch, because the President of China is coming tomorrow. *[Laughter]*

But she's doing great. She sends her love to Elizabeth, her best to all the candidates. She sends her best to all the friends of ours in North Carolina. I'm really proud of the job she's done on behalf of the American people.

I want to thank you all for coming, because it gives me a chance to thank you for what you have done and for what you're going to do. And what I hope you do, and

I think you're going to do, is go to your coffee shops and your places of worship and your community centers and remind people that in America they have a duty to vote, that in this country there is a responsibility that comes with being a United States citizen. We expect you to vote. We expect you to do your duty.

And by the way, when you're reminding them to vote, you might make a couple of suggestions. *[Laughter]* One suggestion is Elizabeth Dole. When you're getting on the telephone and when you're putting up the signs and when you're mailing the mailers, the grassroots that makes a difference in an election, make sure you do so—if you're living in Robin Hayes's district—to send Robin Hayes back to the United States Congress.

I appreciate Robin. I appreciate talking to him. I appreciate his firm stands on national security, and he's kind of wearing me out when it comes to jobs in North Carolina. *[Laughter]* He cares deeply about the people in his district and the people of this State. He cares deeply about making sure people can find work. And I appreciate his deep concern. I appreciate working with him to make sure our economy continues to grow.

With us today as well is Congressman Cass Ballenger. He's another friend. He's another good one you sent up to the United States Congress from the State of North Carolina. And I'm real proud of Sue Myrick. She's done a great job. She's a fine soul. She's got those North Carolina values etched in her heart, and she represents you well in the United States Congress. I want to wish Carolyn Grant all the best, and hope for—the folks in her district realize she is the best candidate for the United States Congress.

I'm thankful for the mayor being here. Mr. Mayor, thanks for your time. [*Applause*] You've got a—a couple of your relatives showed up, Mayor. [*Laughter*]

You've got a lot of great candidates running for your court, particularly the supreme court. And I hope, as you're getting out to work, you make sure you've got a bench that is strong, a bench where people aren't on there to legislate but to interpret the constitution of the State of North Carolina.

And speaking about benches, another reason we need Elizabeth Dole in the Senate, besides the fact that she's going to do a great job for North Carolina, is I've got to have United States Senators who will work with me to make sure our Federal judiciary is strong. The record—I'm picking good people to be judges—good, solid, honorable people to be the judges on the Federal judiciary, people who will strictly interpret the Constitution of the United States, not people who will use the bench to write new legislation.

And the record of this United States Senate is a lousy record. They have politicized the process. They have distorted the records of many of our good candidates we put forward. They're playing petty politics with the candidates that I put up there. We're not getting a hearing fast enough. The percentage of judges is the worst in modern history, percentage of judges approved, and that's not right.

Let me tell you about one, Terry Boyle from North Carolina, I nominated for the fourth circuit court. I nominated him a long while ago. He can't even get a hearing. For the sake of a good, sound judiciary, we need to change the United States Senate, and you can start by electing Elizabeth Dole to the Senate.

You got a good shot, if you go out and vote and you work hard, to capture the legislature. And that's important. So I'm here not only to tout the candidacies of some fine people, but I'm here to thank you—thank you for getting to—getting

ready to get to work. We're coming down the stretch. Candidates can't win without you. So do your duty. Convince your neighbors to do their duty. And by the way, make sure you not only talk to Republicans but talk to some Democrats. Some of these Democrats understand the difference between good Government and bad Government. They know the difference between a good candidate and a bad candidate. They know the difference between plain talk and somebody who is going to cloud up the issues. And also find those who don't give a hoot about a political party and turn them out to vote. It's the right thing for America to do that.

I appreciate so very much Elizabeth's focus on education. I share the same focus. We share the same philosophy. It starts with the belief that every child can learn. That's an important distinction. It's important to have that ingrained in your heart. If you believe every child can learn, it means you're going to insist upon high standards and high expectations. It means you're willing to challenge what I call the soft bigotry of low expectations. If you lower the bar, if you believe certain children can't learn, if you believe certain inner-city kids can't possibly learn, if you believe children whose parents may not speak English as a first language can't learn, then you're willing to have low standards and low expectations. And that's not right for America.

Secondly, Elizabeth and I not only believe you ought to set high standards, we believe in local control of schools. We believe that you got to trust the local folks. Listen, the people who care more about the children of North Carolina are the people of North Carolina, not people living in Washington, DC.

We're spending Federal money on education. As a matter of fact, North Carolina will receive \$1 billion of Federal monies, and that's good. And it's monies targeted to people who need help. But for the first time, we're starting to ask the question,

Are we getting a return on our dollars spent?

See, for the first time the United States Congress has said, "For money spent, we expect every child to learn because we believe every child can learn. Therefore, you got to show us whether or not the children can read and write and add and subtract." And if not—first of all, if so, we'll heap praise where it belongs, and that's on your teachers and your parents and your principals who are working hard to make sure there's a quality education for every child. But if the accountability system shows that there are children trapped in schools which will not teach and will not change, you better make sure you've got public representatives who are willing to challenge the status quo. No child should be left behind in America. I look forward to working with Elizabeth on education matters, based upon the philosophy I just outlined.

I look forward to working with her to make sure medicine works. Listen, medicine has changed; Medicare hasn't. Medicine is modern; Medicare is stuck. And yet it's an incredibly important program. It's a promise which we have made to our seniors. It's a promise that we must keep for the sake of having a stronger America and a better America. I look forward to working with Elizabeth Dole to make sure that Medicare is modern, just like medicine, and the seniors have got a prescription drug plan.

We share the same view that if somebody is looking for work in America and can't find a job, that we need to do everything we can to increase jobs in America, that we ought to be thinking about pro-growth policies—pro-growth so people can find work, not pro-growth so the Federal Government expands; pro-growth so that the person here in North Carolina who's looking for work is able to put food on the table. That's what we want. And one way to do that is to let people keep more of their own money.

We read from the same textbook. It says, if a person has more money in their pocket, he or she is more likely to demand a good or a service. And when somebody demands a good or a service in our society, in the marketplace, somebody is more likely to produce the good or a service. And when somebody produces that good or a service, somebody in North Carolina, or elsewhere in America, is more likely to find work.

The best way to invigorate a sluggish economy, the best way to make sure that people are able to find work, is to let people keep more of their own money. The tax cuts that Elizabeth Dole supports will provide the people of North Carolina, over the next 10 years, \$28 billion in income tax and death tax relief, \$4.5 billion in child credit relief, \$1.8 billion in marriage penalty relief, billions of dollars over the next 10 years to be in your pocket so you can decide what to do with it, so you can help invigorate the economy by just doing what you normally do, which is, demand a good or a service.

But the issue is alive and well because there are some in Washington that do not want to make the tax relief plan we put in place permanent. See, it's temporary. I need a United States Senator to join me—with me to make sure that tax relief is permanent. How can you plan if tax relief is temporary? How can you run your small business if you're not sure what the tax rules are going to be? It doesn't make any sense to say, "On the one hand, we giveth; on the other hand, we taketh away." We need a United States Senate that will make the tax relief permanent.

I know it makes some of them nervous up there to hear us talking about that. But they've got to understand that small business is the engine of economic vitality for America. Seventy percent of new jobs are created by small businesses. We want the entrepreneurial spirit to flourish. We want small businesses to be able to grow to be big businesses. And one way you do so is, you let them keep more money in their

pocket. That's how you encourage small-business growth. And by cutting the individual tax rates, which most small businesses pay because they're sole proprietorships or limited partnerships, we are invigorating the small-business sector of America.

I believe this economy is going to be fine, because interest rates are low, inflation is low, and productivity is high. It's also going to be fine because the entrepreneurial spirit is strong in America. That dream is a big dream for people. Today we've got with us David and Helen-Marie Berthold. They started their own business. It's called Ehren-Haus Industries. It's a plastics and wire company. They had a dream. They wanted to own their own business. They wanted to make employment opportunities available in North Carolina. They worked hard to build up their own business, and they're pretty darn good about it, by the way. David and Marie won the 2001 Entrepreneurial Award from the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce. Marie is the National Association of Women Business Owners Woman of the Year. They know what they're doing.

But let me tell you what they're worried about. They're worried about overregulation. They see reams of regulations coming out of these bureaucracies at the Federal and State level. I look forward to working with Elizabeth Dole to make it easier for small businesses to prosper, not harder for small businesses to prosper, by reducing unnecessary regulations.

Let me tell you what else they're worried about—and so am I. They're worried that they're not going to be able to leave their business to their family. If you're a farmer or you're a rancher or you're a small-business owner, the death tax is an incredibly punitive tax. See, people work all their life to build up their small business, like David and Helen-Marie have done. You've got farmers here in North Carolina, worked all their life to build up their farms and then want to leave it to their child. But the

death tax oftentimes prevents people from doing that. It means a person's assets are taxed twice. It means the Federal Government gets in between the owner of the asset and the person they want to leave it to. You need to have a United States Senator who speaks plainly on how bad the death tax is to America and make sure that the death tax is repealed forever.

Let me talk about one other issue right quick, about domestic policy. And I worry about the cost of health care, and I'm worried about the accessibility of health care. And one reason the cost of health care is up and one reason there's fewer doctors practicing medicine is because there's too many junk and frivolous lawsuits hurting our docs. We want people to have access to the courts, but you can't have access to the courts when you've got frivolous lawsuits filed all over the place. And you've got docs being run out of business.

I was in Mississippi the other day, and I was talking to a young doctor who had moved down to the Delta. He followed his heart. He and his wife moved to the Delta from up North because they wanted to help people who couldn't help themselves with medicine. The lawsuits, the trial lawyers have made it so hard for this guy to practice compassionate medicine. He said, "I've had it. I'm moving back home."

Listen, we can have a health care system that's responsive. We need a legal system that takes care of people who are injured. But we need a law at the Federal level, a medical liability reform law that prevents the plaintiff's attorneys of America from driving up health care costs and driving good people out of medicine.

No, there's a lot of work we're going to do together to make sure that America is a stronger place, make sure the economy goes forward, make sure people get educated. We've also got to make sure America is a secure place, safer place. It's the biggest challenge we have right now in America, is to protect the homeland.

You've just got to know that there's an enemy out there lurking around which hates America. They just do. And they hate us because of what we love. We love freedom, is what we love. We love to be able to worship an Almighty any way we see fit in America. We value our elections, although the candidates may be getting a little tired of it. We value open discourse. We value a free press. We value freedom. And so long as we love freedom, there's going to be an enemy out there which hates what we love. You've just got to understand that.

We're in a new era. Oceans no longer protect us. After September 11th, 2001, we learned a harsh lesson here in America—that reality has changed. It used to be, when we were coming up or when we were younger, that two oceans could protect us. And there would be a conflict overseas, and the United States had the luxury of picking and choosing whether or not we wanted to participate in the conflict. We had that luxury, but it's changed. And America must understand it has changed. No longer can we assume oceans will protect us—as a matter of fact, quite the contrary. We must assume that the enemy is coming, and we've got to do everything we can to protect the homeland.

That's why I started talking about the issue of Iraq. In the new reality, we must view all threats—we must take all threats seriously. We must have a cold, hard look at every threat facing America. And the man over there in Iraq is a threat. After all, he has gassed his own people. He hates what we stand for. He hates what America believes in. He has not only gassed his own people; he used weapons of mass destruction on his own people. He's used weapons of mass destruction on countries in his neighborhood. He has told the world he won't have weapons of mass destruction; for 11 years he's lied. Time and time and time again, he has lied. Time and time and time again, the United Nations has

passed resolutions telling him, "Disarm." He's totally ignored the resolutions.

So here is our strategy. Our strategy is to make it clear to the United Nations: We want you to be effective. We don't want you to be the League of Nations. We want you to be an effective United Nations. It's your choice to make. We're sending a clear message to Mr. Saddam Hussein: We believe in peace in America. We want the world to be peaceful, not only for ourselves but for people in your neighborhood. And so you must disarm. You said you would disarm, and you must disarm. It's your choice to make.

We have made the call to the international community and to Mr. Saddam Hussein, himself, to disarm. But my friends, if the United Nations won't act, if they're feeble in their responsibility, and if Saddam Hussein won't disarm, the United States will lead a coalition in the name of peace to disarm Saddam Hussein.

That's our responsibility. That's my responsibility to see as clearly as I can see, to anticipate true threats to our homeland and deal with them—deal with them in a way that enables me to tell you that I'm doing everything I can—or we're doing everything we can to protect the people. That's our most important responsibility.

There is a lot of good people working hard on your behalf, people at the Federal level, people at the State level, people at the local level, a lot of people. See, we're on alert. We understand the realities. We remember, and we're not forgetting what took place. We saw what happened in Indonesia. We understand the people we're dealing with. There's no therapy, by the way, that can heal these people. These are coldblooded killers; that's all they are.

And so, therefore, we got to do everything we can here at home to button up the homeland. That's why I asked the Congress to join me in setting up a Department of Homeland Security, a Department that's—whose job it is to make sure that number one priority of agencies involved

with the homeland security is just that—is your protection. We need people under one agency, I felt, because in order to make sure that that becomes the number one priority, that some cultures within agencies need to change. And we could effect a cultural change better if there was one agency involved with your protection.

We're making some progress. The House voted a good bill, and the Senate is stuck. The Senate hasn't gotten a homeland security bill. They're arguing over things. As a matter of fact, they said, "We'll get you one, Mr. President, but you got to pay a price." And here's the price they wanted me to pay: They want to roll back an authority that every President since John F. Kennedy has had, which will allow me to suspend some work rules for the sake of national security.

See, I need to have that capacity, like every President since John Kennedy has had, to say that it's in our national interest that certain work rules be suspended, not that we're going to suspend collective bargaining rights, not that people can't accumulate the way they see fit, but that certain rules which may get in the way of our ability to protect America need to be suspended.

I'll give you an example. We thought it was important for customs agents to wear radiological detection devices. After all, if you're worried about weapons of mass destruction coming into America, you want your customs people to have a device that will help detect weapons of mass destruction. The union heads said, "Wait a minute. You can't make these people wear that. That's an issue over which we must have collective bargaining." See, because I had the power to suspend the rules, after 4 months' discussion, we got it done.

But the Senate is stuck. They're more interested in some special interests up there, and I'm not going to stand for it. It's not right for America. I need to be able to put the right people at the right

place at the right time to protect America, and Elizabeth Dole will be a strong ally.

The best way to protect America, however, is to hunt the killers down, one at a time, and bring them to justice. And we're making progress. But it's a different kind of war. Used to, you could measure progress based upon the number of tanks that no—were out of commission or number of airplanes you shot down.

These people we fight are people who hide in caves or lurk around the dark corners of parts of the world and send youngsters to their suicidal death. See, that's the new kind of army we face, and they're tough. They're not as tough as we are, but they're tough. They hide. You got to understand when you explain this to your children—it's important you do and—or people who are questioning why this is going on, you've got explain to them that here in America we value life. Everybody counts. Everybody is a precious soul. But they, the enemy, they don't value life. They've hijacked a great religion, and they murder. Innocent life doesn't matter to them. It just doesn't count. It doesn't—it's just not on their radar screen.

And there's a difference. And therefore, we fight a determined enemy. But the only way to deal with them is to keep our coalition strong and to hunt them down. You know, I laid out a doctrine—you just got to know it still stands. It said, "Either you're with us; either you love freedom and with nations which embrace freedom, or you're with the enemy. There's no in-between." And the doctrine still stands.

Sometimes you'll see the progress on your TV screens, and sometimes you're not going to see the progress on your TV screens. It's a different kind of war. We're cutting off their money when we can find it. We're sharing intelligence, and we're hauling them in.

The other day a guy popped his head up, named bin al-Shibh. [*Laughter*] He's not a problem anymore. [*Laughter*] He was a significant character because he wanted

to be the 20th hijacker. He was still out there plotting.

Slowly but surely, this great country, with our friends and allies, are hunting them down and bringing them to justice. It doesn't matter how long it takes, by the way. Yesterday I signed a defense appropriations bill, right there in the Rose Garden. I said two things about it. One, anytime we put our troops into harm's way, they deserve the best pay, the best training, and the best possible equipment.

And secondly, that was a message to friend and foe alike: It doesn't matter how long it takes. The increase in defense spending, the largest since Ronald Reagan, sends a clear message: We're in this deal for the long haul. See, we understand freedom. We understand responsibility. I don't know what the enemy was thinking when they hit us. I can't imagine. They must have thought we were so self-absorbed, so selfish, so materialistic that after 2001—September 2001, oh, we might have filed a lawsuit or two. They didn't know. They don't understand America. They don't understand America like I understand America. When it comes to the defense of our freedom, when it comes to our obligations and duty for the future for our children, this country will remain strong, and this country will remain tough.

For those of you who have got relatives in the United States military, you tell them their Commander in Chief has got all the confidence in the world in those good troops. I'm glad they're on my side.

No, we got a lot of work to do, but I want you to know—I firmly believe this—that if we stay the course and do our duty, fulfill our obligation, we can achieve peace. That's my dream. My dream is not only for a peaceful America but to bring peace in parts of the world who have quit on peace.

I believe it's possible that we can achieve peace in the Middle East. I have a clear vision on how we can get there—going to have to renounce terror. We have to re-

main true to our principles. We have to remember that freedom is God-given—it's not United States-given—that freedom is a universal value, not an American value.

No, out of the evil done to America can come some great good, starting with peace in the world. And here at home, we can be a better America. You just got to understand there are pockets of despair in this country. People hurt—places where people are addicted or lost. People wonder whether or not the American experience, the so-called American Dream, is meant for them. My attitude is, so long as one of us hurts, all of us hurt. But I believe we can eradicate those pockets of despair and hopelessness. I believe that—not only by having a good education system, good health care, making sure that the welfare system is in place that encourages and helps people work—I believe we can accomplish that. But we've got to understand the limitations of Government.

Government can hand out money, but it can't put hope in people's hearts. It can't put a sense of purpose in people's lives. The way we can change America—one heart, one soul, one conscience at a time—is for each of us to understand people hurt and put our arm around them and tell them we love them. If you want to change America, love your neighbor just like you'd like to be loved yourself.

No, our vision—Elizabeth's vision and my vision—understands the great power of all faiths in our society. We understand a universal law of love. And we understand that America can change, that there are forces more powerful than addiction; there are forces more powerful than—powerful than hopelessness; there are forces more powerful than loneliness.

My call to our fellow Americans, if you want to join the fight against evil, is do some good. Mentor a child, just like your mayor does. Mentor a child. You can save Charlotte, North Carolina, one heart, one soul, one conscience at a time. Be a Boy Scout leader or a Girl Scout leader. Go

to your Boys Clubs or Girls Clubs. Feed the hungry. Find housing for those who need a home. There's all kinds of ways you can help.

One person can't do everything. I recognize that. But each of us can be that one person doing something to make sure that the enemy which hits us understands that they hit the greatest, most powerful, and yet, at the same time, most compassionate country on the face of the Earth.

No, they hit us; they didn't know who they were hitting. Out of the evil done to this great country is going to come a more peaceful world. And out of the evil done to this great country is going to come a more hopeful day.

I want to thank you for your interest in our political process. I urge you to get out the vote. In the meantime, may God bless you all, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:35 a.m. at the Charlotte Coliseum. In his remarks, he referred to senatorial candidate Elizabeth Dole and her husband, former Senator Bob Dole; President Jiang Zemin of China; Carolyn Grant, candidate for North Carolina's 13th Congressional District; Mayor Patrick McCrory of Charlotte, NC; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Remarks in Columbia, South Carolina October 24, 2002

The President. Thank you all very much. Well, thanks for coming out today.

Audience member. I love Bush!

The President. And I love South Carolina. [*Laughter*]

We've got a lot of friends here. I want to thank you all for coming today. I want to talk about a couple of things. I want to talk about some of the challenges facing our country. We've got some steep hills to climb, but there's no doubt in my mind we can climb them. After all, we're the finest nation on the face of the Earth.

I want to talk a little politics with you. You see, there's no question in my mind that if you're interested in the State of the South Carolina, and if you're interested in the future of this State, you need to have Mark Sanford as the next Governor. And there's also no question in my mind, one, that you've been really well represented by the great Strom Thurmond.

I'm really proud to be able to serve with the Senator. As a matter of fact, he came by the other day. We were talking about

an important issue, and he reminded me that early December is his 100th birthday. [*Laughter*] I couldn't tell if he was hinting or not, so I took the bait and invited him over to the White House for his 100th birthday party. [*Laughter*] So he's coming.

So you've got to make sure you replace this good man with somebody who can do the job, somebody who will do what's right for South Carolina, and somebody who will make the strong stands for America. No question in my mind, the right man to take the place of Strom Thurmond is soon-to-be United States Senator Lindsey Graham.

I appreciate Jenny Sanford being here, your next first lady. She brought those four Sanford boys with her. [*Laughter*] Speaking about first ladies, you drew the short straw. See, if Graham and Sanford were smart, they'd have asked First Lady Laura Bush to come instead of me. But I—he said he did. [*Laughter*] The reason she couldn't come, well, it rained in Crawford. [*Laughter*] And that's where she is, and she's