

leader when it comes to working on homeland security matters.

But I want to remind you that the best way to protect the homeland is to hunt down the enemy, one by one, and bring them to justice. The terrorists declared war on the United States of America, and war is what they got. This country will not rest; we will not tire; we will do what it takes to remove this danger from civilization and make America secure.

For those of you who have got relatives in the United States military, I want to thank you. And you make sure you send word to them that their Commander in Chief is incredibly proud of the sacrifices they're making on behalf of our Nation.

And I also want you to know that I understand that the best way to secure America is to advance human liberty. Free nations do not attack their neighbors. Free nations do not develop weapons of mass terror. The United States of America strongly believes that freedom is the right of every single person, that freedom is not America's gift to the world, that freedom is the Almighty's gift to every person who lives in this world. With the advance of human freedom, the world will be more peaceful, and America will be more secure.

We've overcome a lot of challenges in the last 2½ years, and there will be other challenges. And in my judgment, the best way for Mississippi to deal with the challenges you face is to make sure you put a Governor in place who's optimistic and hopeful, somebody who can unite this State to get people pulling in the same direction, somebody who firmly believes in his heart of hearts that Mississippi "can do better." And that person and that leader is the next Governor of the State of Mississippi, Haley Barbour.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:08 a.m. at the DeSoto Civic Center. In his remarks, he referred to gubernatorial candidate Haley Barbour and his wife, Marsha; Amy Tuck, incumbent candidate for Lieutenant Governor; Phil Bryant, incumbent candidate for State auditor of public accounts; Julio Del Castillo, candidate for Mississippi secretary of state; Scott Newton, candidate for State attorney general; Max Phillips, candidate for State commissioner of agriculture and commerce; Tate Reeves, candidate for State treasurer; and Charles W. Pickering, Sr., nominee to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit.

Remarks in Paducah, Kentucky November 1, 2003

The President. Thank you all.

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

The President. Thank you all very much. It's actually 3 more days—[laughter]—3 more days until Ernie Fletcher becomes the Governor of Kentucky. Thanks for coming. I appreciate you taking some time out of your Saturday afternoon to say hello. I'm honored so many people in western Kentucky came out. It's good to be back in Paducah. It's not my first time here.

The first time here, I was knocking on doors asking for the vote, for me. [Laughter] This time I'm back, knocking on doors, asking the vote for Ernie Fletcher.

And the reason why, there's no doubt in my mind he is the best candidate for the job. I like the fact that he was a fighter pilot. [Laughter] That says something about him, doesn't it? I like the fact that he was a physician. He's a healer. I like the fact that he's an engineer. I like the fact that

he's been an effective United States Congressman. I know, I work with him closely.

You should like the fact that when he becomes the Governor and he calls up to Washington, the President will answer the phone. I appreciate the fact that, like me, he married well. *[Laughter]* Laura sends her love to the people of western Kentucky. You drew the short straw; you got me. But I can't wait for Glenna to become the first lady of Kentucky. She'll bring a lot of class to the Governor's mansion. Glenna, Glenna Fletcher is a good soul.

I like and support Ernie Fletcher because he's a man of integrity. He understands that when you assume an oath of office, you have an obligation to bring honor to the office that you assume. If you're interested in having somebody set a good example at your State capitol, if you want somebody who will send the right signal to the youth of Kentucky, the right man is Ernie Fletcher.

I'm here to embrace his candidacy, but most importantly, I'm here to ask you to go out and turn out the vote. When you guys are driving your cycles, make sure when you see another cyclist that you get them to go vote. When you farmers are going to your coffee shops, make sure you tell your people that work the land with you to get out the vote.

See, we have an obligation in the free society to vote. I urge all people in this great State to vote. And when you're on the phones urging them to vote, make sure you tell them what's in their interest, and what's in their interest is to have Ernie Fletcher as the Governor of the State of Kentucky.

I appreciate the fact that when Ernie wins, he's going to be the Governor of everybody. He's not going to say, "I'm the Governor of this particular political party or that political party." He's going to be the Governor of every single citizen. So when you're out canvassing for the vote, when you're knocking on doors, you'll find some disgruntled Democrats. Make sure

you encourage them to vote. You'll find discerning independents. Make sure you encourage them to vote. I'm here to ask you to do your duty as a citizen to vote and to do extra work to make sure you turn out to vote for this good man, Ernie Fletcher.

And don't forget to put in a good word for Steve Pence. *[Laughter]* See, he's running for the Lieutenant Governor. He's from western Kentucky; he knows how you think. It makes sense to put him in as Lieutenant Governor. See, Ernie picked him, but I picked him first. *[Laughter]* I don't know if you recall, but I named him the U.S. Attorney for western Kentucky. I did because he's a man of integrity; he's a good, honest man, the kind of fellow that when he holds office you can say, "I'm proud of the way he's conducting himself in office."

I also want to thank very much the United States Senators who have joined us, strong allies, good people, people who will make you proud here in the great State of Kentucky, starting with Mitch McConnell. I appreciate you coming, Mitch. Speaking of somebody who married well—*[laughter]*—he married so well, I picked his wife to be in my Cabinet—*[laughter]*—the Secretary of Labor, Elaine Chao, doing a great job. I appreciate you, Elaine.

When I was a kid, I always hoped to have a Jim Bunning baseball card. *[Laughter]* Now, I get to call him Senator, and so do you. It's vital you send this good man back to the United States Senate in 2004.

Kentucky has sent some fine folks up to Washington in the United States Congress, the House of Representatives. Two of them are here with us, besides Ernie, and that's Congressman Ed Whitfield and Congressman Ron Lewis. *[Applause]* Thank you all for coming. Hi, Ed. I'll try it again. And Congressman Ron Lewis, good to see you, Ron. Thanks for coming.

As well we've got some other good folks who have decided to run for office. Trey

Grayson is running for secretary of state. Jack Wood is trying to become the attorney general; he's running hard. Linda Greenwell is running for State auditor.

In order to be a good Governor, you'd better be running on a good platform, so you've got to run for a reason. You've got to give people a reason to vote for you. Ernie Fletcher has done that. He mentioned jobs. Let me tell you something: We both share the same passion for our fellow citizen who is looking for work. So long as one person is looking for work, so long as one person who wants to work can't find a job, it says we've got an issue here in America.

I put forth a strong, progrowth package; that means a package that encourages economic growth so people can find work. Ernie Fletcher supported that plan. We need a pretty good dose of medicine for our economy. Remember, when I first came into office, we were in recession. That's three quarters of negative growth. We were going backwards, and then the enemy hit us. And then we had some of our corporate citizens who forgot to tell the truth. By the way, if you notice, some of those who forgot to tell the truth are now paying the price for not telling the truth.

All of that affected the confidence of the American people, so we acted. We acted on this theory—and this is important to have a Governor who understands how it works—when a person has got more money in their pocket, they're going to demand a good or a service. And when they demand a good or a service, somebody is going to produce that good or a service. And when somebody produces that good or a service, somebody is more likely to find a job. The tax cuts we passed came at the right time, and they're helping this economy.

In order to make sure your economy grows, you better make sure you've got a Governor who's not going to play politics with the people's money, somebody to

bring some fiscal discipline to the statehouse. So it's not only a combination of progrowth policies, but you better watch how the money is spent. Ernie Fletcher is a fiscal watchdog. He understands whose money we spend in government. We're not spending the government's money. We're spending the people's money, and you better have a Governor who knows that.

In order to make sure that Kentucky is a good place for people to do business so people can find work, you need a Governor who's willing to stand up to the plaintiff's attorneys. You see, what you don't want is a State dominated by plaintiff's attorneys so you've got a bunch of frivolous and junk lawsuits that on the one hand deny a person a chance to get their day in court, and on the other hand make it awfully costly for the State of Kentucky. You need medical liability reform. You need a Governor who's willing to stand up and be tough.

When I was the Governor of Texas, I used to tell our people that education is to a State what national defense is to the Federal Government, the top priority. One of the reasons I'm proud to stand by Ernie is because he understands that we must educate every single child in the State of Kentucky. He'll stand with the teachers. He'll stand with the parents. He will challenge what I call the soft bigotry of low expectations. See, when you lower the bar, when you have low expectations, you're going to get lousy results. You must have a Governor who's willing to raise the bar, to set high standards, to have high hopes for every single child. You must make sure you've got a Governor who insists that the curriculum used in public schools works, not based upon some fancy theory but actually works. You've got to make sure every child can read. You need to use phonics in the classroom. Ernie Fletcher understands that.

And finally, there are a lot of people who hurt around our country. You must

have a Governor who understands that government can hand out money—and we do a pretty good job of it sometimes—but what government cannot do is put hope in a person's heart or a sense of purpose in people's lives. That's done when a fellow citizen surrounds a soul with love. It's done when people who have heard the universal call to love a neighbor just like you'd like to be loved yourself step forward and say, "I want to be a part of the fabric of change in a society. I want to help feed the hungry, house the homeless. I want to be there to help the drug addict understand that if you change your heart, you can change your behavior." It is essential.

I have put forth a Faith-Based Initiative, and I'm talking about all faiths, all faiths. And I put out a Faith-Based Initiative because I want the great strength of the country, the heart and soul of the American people, to rally to the cause of those who hurt. It's important to have a Governor who does not fear faith but welcomes faith and to—providing help for those who hurt, and that Governor is going to be Ernie Fletcher.

I look forward to working with Ernie Fletcher to make sure that the homeland security initiative is done well here in Kentucky. We want to make sure that there's good coordination between the Federal, the State, and the local authorities, to make sure your good police folks and firefighters and emergency-response teams have a coordinated strategy to be able to deal with a situation if it were to occur. The thing I appreciate about Ernie Fletcher is he understands what I know, that the best way to secure the homeland is to hunt the killers down, one by one, and bring them to justice, what America will do.

We must never forget the lessons of September the 11th, 2001. We must understand that we can't sit back and hope for the best, that when we see danger we must respond. We must respond in a way that is responsible. We are responsible for the security of the people of this country. We

must use every power we have to make sure that another attack does not occur. The lessons of September the 11th, 2001, are indelibly etched in my mind. I will not forget the responsibility that we have to the people, and neither will Ernie.

For those of you with loved ones in the United States military, you get a hold of them either by e-mail or phone or letter, and you tell them their Commander in Chief is incredibly proud of the sacrifices they are making for this country.

But I also want you to know that we'll stay on the offensive, but we'll also stay on the offensive for the spread of freedom. The greatest security America can gain is from the advance of human liberty. Free nations do not attack their neighbors. Free nations do not develop weapons of mass terror to threaten or blackmail the world. No, the greatest security for America will come when America continues to lead the world toward a free society. We understand—we understand—that freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is God Almighty's gift to each and every person that lives in the world.

In this war on terror, I've had no stronger supporter than Ernie Fletcher. I'm proud to stand with this man. There's no doubt in my mind he'll make a great Governor. There's no doubt in my mind he'll be a Governor for every single person that lives in this vital and important State. There's no doubt in my mind he's got a vision that's clear and hopeful, a vision that will provide the best opportunity, so that everybody who lives here can say, "I've been given my chance to succeed. I've been given a good education. The environment for finding a job is strong. I can raise my family in peace and security." There's no doubt in my mind that the right person to lead this great State into the 21st century is Ernie Fletcher.

Thank you all for coming. May God bless. God bless you all. Work hard. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:44 p.m. at Barkley Regional Airport. In his remarks, he

referred to Glenna A. Fletcher, wife of gubernatorial candidate Ernie Fletcher.

Remarks in London, Kentucky November 1, 2003

The President. Thank you all for coming. Thank you for being here. I'm honored to be here. Thanks for so many people showing up today. It's a beautiful day to talk about the next Governor of the State of Kentucky.

My only regret is I wasn't here a month ago for the fried chicken festival. [Laughter] I appreciate so many folks showing up. It's a good sign, Ernie. It's a good sign people care about their government. It's a good sign that people know they have got a responsibility to vote. I'm here to say as clearly I can, the right person to become the next Governor of the State of Kentucky is Ernie Fletcher.

I want to thank you all for bringing your families. I also want to thank the Bush Volunteer Fire Department for coming. That's a heck of a name you chose. [Laughter] I'm proud to share it with you, and thanks for what you do.

I can say without any uncertainty at all that Ernie is the right man to be the Governor. Listen to this: He's a fighter pilot. That says something. And he's a healer. He's a doctor. He's an engineer. He did a fine job in the United States Congress. He's had good experience. He married well—[laughter]—just like me. I appreciate Glenna. I appreciate the sacrifices she's making for the people of this great State.

The people of this State must be assured that when they elect somebody to high office, that person will uphold the dignity of that office. You want your kids looking at somebody who—for whom you can be proud. Ernie Fletcher values his faith. He values his family. He understands the responsibilities that you must assume when

you get elected to high office. The right man for the job is Ernie Fletcher.

It's one thing to be listening to the speeches; it's another thing to be doing the work. I'm asking you to go out and turn out the vote. I'm asking you to go to your coffee shops, your farm implement dealers, your community centers, your houses of worship, and remind people they have a duty to vote. In this free land you have a duty to exercise your responsibility. And you might also remind them when they're heading to the polls, he's the right man for the job.

And don't overlook those disgruntled Democrats, either. [Laughter] They want good, clean government in Frankfort. There's plenty of independents you can encourage to go vote. This is voter turnout time now. The good people of this part of the State understand what I'm talking about. You go find your neighbors and get them to the polls, and you'll be proud of the job he does on behalf of everybody in this State.

Make sure that you also get them to vote for the Lieutenant Governor. [Laughter] It's kind of natural, isn't it? I'm proud of the fact that Ernie picked Steve Pence. He's a good, solid man. See, I picked him first. I don't know if you know this or not, but I named him to be the U.S. Attorney for western Kentucky. I looked long and hard to get the right person to do this important job. Steve Pence was the man. He's not only the man to be the U.S. Attorney; he's the man to become your Lieutenant Governor.

Laura sends her love to the people of eastern Kentucky. She's a fabulous First