

Koontz, fire chief, County Line Volunteer
Fire Department.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on the Defense
Authorization Conference Report
November 7, 2003

I commend the House for passing the Defense Authorization conference report and showing strong bipartisan support for America's national security, our troops, and their families. This bill includes my request for a third straight pay raise, more resources for equipment and training, and quality of life improvements so that our military continues to be the finest fighting force in the world.

The legislation also makes good progress toward transforming and modernizing our military so that it is best prepared to protect Americans.

Finally, I am pleased that the House has resolved the issue of concurrent receipt for military retirees in a fair and responsible manner.

The President's Radio Address
November 8, 2003

Good morning. This week, we heard some good news about the effects of tax relief on the American economy. The Department of Labor reported that our economy added 126,000 new jobs in October. And over the past 3 months, there were 286,000 new jobs. The unemployment rate fell to 6 percent. The 4-week average for jobless claims has declined in 6 of the past 7 weeks, and manufacturers reported that orders and shipments are both rising.

This news comes one week after we heard that economic output rose at a 7.2 percent annual rate in the third quarter, the fastest pace of growth in nearly 20 years. America's economy is getting stronger every day. American companies are investing. Americans are buying homes at a record pace, and homeownership is near record levels. Stock market values have risen, adding about \$2 trillion in wealth

for investors since the beginning of the year.

We can all be encouraged, but we cannot be satisfied. These are early signs of progress. Now we must turn this progress into broad and lasting gains for all Americans. Our improving economy is also a changing economy, and some workers need help preparing for new jobs and new industries.

In Winston-Salem, North Carolina, where I traveled this week, manufacturing jobs have been declining for decades. The textile industry and furniture makers and farmers are hurting. In Winston-Salem, I also saw a good program at a community college that is training unemployed workers for new jobs in industries which are growing, such as biotechnology. Local businesses, along with the Department of

Labor, are supporting this job training program. We must give more workers the opportunity to learn new skills so they can get ahead and provide for their families.

My administration is investing more than \$15 billion each year in job training and employment services. Americans can go to more than 1,900 one-stop career centers around the country, where, in a single location, they can check job listings, get help with a job application, and sign up for job training programs.

We're also helping more students attend community colleges, where so many people find new skills. We boosted our request for Pell grants, which help adults of all ages pay for college, by 45 percent since I took office. And I've asked Congress to establish personal reemployment accounts for out-of-work Americans to help them in their job search. These accounts would give up to \$3,000 to unemployed workers to get training, to find child care, or to relocate to a city where there is a job.

The most important thing we can do to help those looking for work is to make sure our current economic growth results in more new jobs. I have proposed a six-point economic plan to encourage companies to expand and hire workers. We must bring health care costs under control, reform our civil courts to end the junk lawsuits hurting

small businesses, cut needless regulations so that small-business owners can focus on pleasing their customers instead of pleasing bureaucrats. We must pass a national energy policy to ensure an affordable and reliable supply of energy to our economy, promote free trade agreements that bring good jobs to America, and make tax relief permanent, so the gains we have seen do not disappear when tax relief is scheduled to go away.

The tax relief of the past 2 years was based on a principle that when Americans keep more of their own earnings, they spend more and invest more and move the economy forward. We're now seeing that happen. Our economy is on a rising road, and now we must take the remaining steps to ensure that our economy becomes a lasting expansion and our prosperity extends to every corner of America.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9:20 a.m. on November 7 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 8. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 7 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks at a Bush-Cheney Luncheon in Little Rock, Arkansas November 10, 2003

Thank you all. Thank you all very much. Thanks for coming. Thank you. Please be seated, thanks. Thanks for coming. Thanks for the warm welcome. I appreciate your fine words, Skinny. *[Laughter]* I got off the airplane, I wasn't sure who I was looking at. *[Laughter]*

So we get in the limousine, and we're driving here from the airport, and the Governor says, "Do you still follow college

football?" *[Laughter]* I wasn't exactly sure what he was driving at. I said, "Yeah, I pay attention to it." He said, "Were you paying attention to it a couple of weeks ago?" I said, "Yes, I sure was, Governor. Congratulations to the Hawgs."

Thank you all for coming today. What we're doing today is we're laying the foundation for what is going to be a victory