

The President's Radio Address *September 18, 2004*

Good morning. Three years after the attacks of September the 11th, our Nation continues to confront the threats to our security. We're acting to protect the homeland, to track and disrupt terror networks across the world, and to hold to account the sponsors of terror. We're staying on the offensive, striking the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home.

Americans also know that our long-term security requires a broader commitment. Our country is determined to spread hope and economic progress and freedom as the alternatives to hatreds, resentments, and terrorist violence. In hopeful societies, men and women are far less likely to embrace murderous ideologies. And free governments will fight terrorists in their midst, instead of harboring them. We know that to create a safer world, we must build a better world, and we are acting.

This week, I will speak in New York to the United Nations General Assembly, and I will talk about the great possibilities of our time to improve health, expand prosperity, and extend freedom in our world. America and many nations are taking a bold stand in the fight against HIV/AIDS. My Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief will provide an unprecedented \$15 billion over 5 years to support the fight against the AIDS pandemic throughout the world, with the focus on the most afflicted countries in Africa, the Caribbean, and Asia. These funds are already at work helping to prevent new infections, provide treatment and care for millions of victims.

We've also joined with other nations to create the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. In 3 years, the fund has raised \$5.6 billion in pledges and provided funding for projects in more than 90 countries. And we will persist in the effort until these diseases are defeated.

America and many other nations are also determined to turn the tide against global poverty by taking a new approach to economic development. It is now our policy to increase foreign aid to those governments that are serious about fighting corruption and improving education, health care, and economic opportunity for their people. Modern history teaches that honest governments that invest in their people and promote economic freedom can lift millions out of poverty and despair. And governments that truly serve their people deserve our help.

The health and well-being of developing nations also depend on the defeat of hunger and illiteracy. We have launched an Initiative to End Hunger in Africa by teaching modern farming techniques and providing drought-resistant crops to farmers on that continent. And through our Africa Education Initiative, we're training teachers, distributing textbooks, and encouraging more school enrollment.

America and many nations are also building a better world by standing with the liberated peoples of Iraq and Afghanistan as they move toward democracy. More than 10 million Afghan citizens have now registered to vote in next month's election. Iraq is approaching free elections in January. Terrorist enemies are trying to stop the progress of both those countries, and their violent and merciless attacks may increase as elections draw near. But all the world can be certain: America and our allies will keep our commitments to the Afghan and Iraqi people. Our long-term security—the safety of our children and grandchildren—will be served when the broader Middle East is home to stable, democratic governments that fight terror.

At the United Nations this week, I will make some additional proposals to expand

prosperity and accelerate the march of freedom in our world. Never in the history of the United Nations have we faced so many opportunities to create a safer world by building a better world. For the sake of our common security and for the sake of our common values, the international community must rise to this historic moment. And the United States is prepared to lead.

Thank you for listening.

Remarks Following a Meeting With First-Responders in Orange Beach, Alabama

September 19, 2004

Listen, thank you all for coming. Today I've been joined by Governor Riley and Governor Bush, Alabama and Florida, and Members of the Senate from Alabama, Sessions and Shelby, Congressman Jo Bonner, Congressman Miller from Florida, mayors from the affected areas, Mayor Russo, Bodenhamer, and Russell.

The devastation caused by Ivan is terrible. This was a big storm that caused a lot of damage and a lot of suffering. And I want to thank the people that are working hard to bring some sense of order in the lives of these citizens, folks at the State level and at the local level. I want to thank the FEMA workers for laying the foundation for what is going to be a recovery.

I was—I know people all across our country join me in praying for the families of those who suffered loss of life. I want to thank the search and rescue teams from all over the United States who are here, using every possible asset they have to find those who are still missing.

We understand thousands don't have power. I want to thank the power companies that understand that they have an obligation and a duty to restore power as quickly as possible. There are a lot of people working for the power companies, a

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:30 a.m. on September 17 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on September 18. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 17 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

lot of people stringing line from all over the southeast of our country. I want to thank them for taking time to come down here and help the people sorely affected by this terrible storm.

We toured the beaches in Florida and Alabama and saw how powerful this storm was. But the Governors and I fully understand there are people inland who have been affected. There are people in rural Alabama, small-town Alabama whose lives have been turned upside down by this storm as well, people in rural Florida who have been affected by this storm. And I want them to understand that when I talk about FEMA help, FEMA help not only extends to the beaches; it extends to people inland here in the State of Alabama and in Florida as well.

The amazing thing about these catastrophes is how the American people rise to the occasion. The amazing thing about devastation is how there is such compassion in the face of such devastation. When I was visiting with some of the residents, they were telling me the amount of—number of people that have showed up just to provide help, people that have heard a call to love a neighbor in a time of distress. And I want to thank all those who have