

NOTE: The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at a Rally in New York City September 20, 2004

The President. Thank you all for coming. *Audience members.* Viva Bush! Viva Bush! Viva Bush!

The President. Thank you all. Thanks for coming. Thank you all for coming. So I said to Pataki, try introducing me at the convention. If it works out well, you can introduce me here tonight. [Laughter] He gave a great introduction at the convention, for which I am grateful. And I appreciate his leadership, and I appreciate his friendship.

I also appreciate the friendship of Rudy. I had the privilege of traveling with Rudy in New Mexico. They've even heard of him there. [Laughter] And he did a great job. It was a lot of fun. Thanks for coming.

So when I asked Laura to marry me, she said, "Fine, just so long as I never have to give a speech." [Laughter] I said, "Well, okay, you'll never have to give a speech." Fortunately, she didn't hold me to that promise. The American people got to see a compassionate, strong, kind person.

I want to thank—I also want to thank Libby and Emily Pataki for joining us, and Judith Giuliani for joining us as well. I wish Howard Mills all the best in his race for the United States Senate. I want to thank Lew Eisenberg for his hard work to make this event successful. I want to thank Al Hoffman for his hard work. I want to thank my friend Mercer Reynolds, Sandy Treadwell, Mike Long. Most of all, I want to thank you all for coming. Vito Fossella is here. Where is old Vito? Somewhere around here. He's a Congressman. He's a great guy.

Thanks for coming. My spirits are high. I'm honored you're here. I appreciate the

support we receive here in the great State of New York. And a couple of folks slid across the border from New Jersey and Connecticut as well. [Laughter] I'm proud you're here. I'm not much of a prognosticator, but things seem to be going awfully well in the three States I just mentioned. I'm enjoying myself on the campaign trail.

We've got a great country, and I love to get out amongst the people. Laura and I are traveling a lot. The crowds are huge. Enthusiasm is high. We're going to win in November.

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

The President. Thank you all. I'm ready for the stretch run. I know where I want to lead the country. I look forward to telling the people what I believe. I believe that schools can do a better job of teaching our children. Listen, I went to Washington to challenge this practice of just shuffling kids through schools year after year, grade after grade. It's what I call challenging the soft bigotry of low expectations.

We've raised the bar. We've increased funding. But in return, we're now saying, "Why don't you measure early so we can correct problems early, before they're too late." And the achievement gap in America is closing, and we're not going to turn around. We're not going to go backwards. We're going to stay on this path to excellence for every child, *por cada nino, por cada nino*.

I went to Washington to fix problems. I believed that we needed to fix Medicare. You know, medicine has changed; Medicare hadn't. We would pay \$100,000 for heart surgery but not a dime for prescription

drugs that might prevent the heart surgery from being needed in the first place. We used to call it “Medi-scare” because politicians were afraid to talk about it. I’m not afraid to take on the tough issue. We’ve modernized Medicare. Our seniors are going to get prescription drug coverage in 2006, and we’re not going to turn back.

I believe the role of Government is not to create wealth but an environment in which the entrepreneurs can flourish. I believe that good Government policy unleashes the innovation and energy of our farmers, ranchers, small-business owners, dreamers, doers. And that’s why we unleashed that energy with the largest tax cut in a generation.

Listen, we’ve been through a lot when it comes to this economy. I don’t need to tell people in New York what it’s been like. We had a recession. We had some corporate citizens forget what it means to be responsible citizens, and they didn’t tell the truth. That affected our economy, by the way. We passed laws that now say, “We’re not going to tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of America, pure and simple.” The attacks on this city hurt us. They say we lost about a million jobs in the 3 months after September the 11th, but we’ve overcome these obstacles. This economy of ours is growing at a rate as fast as any in nearly 20 years. The national unemployment rate is 5.4 percent, which is lower than the average of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Over the past year, 47 of the 50 States have added jobs, including the great State of New York. This economy is strong, and it is getting stronger.

A President’s most solemn duty is to protect the American people. And here’s what I believe: I believe if we show any uncertainty or weakness in this decade, this world will drift toward tragedy. This will not happen on my watch.

I’ve got a clear and positive plan to build a safer world and more hopeful America. I’m running with what I call a compassionate conservative philosophy that Gov-

ernment should help people improve their lives, not try to run their lives.

I also understand the world in which we live is changing. Listen, the workforce has changed. Years ago, a man would be the worker, and he would have one job, one career, and receive one pension plan, one health care plan, and that was it. This world we live in is really different. People change careers and jobs. Women are working both inside and outside the house.

And yet the fundamental institutions of our Government have not changed with the times. Think about it: The retirement systems haven’t changed; the health care systems haven’t changed; the Tax Code hasn’t changed; worker training hasn’t changed. I’m running for 4 years to change the basic systems of Government to reflect the world we live in, so people will have a better chance of realizing the great dreams of this country.

Audience member. [Inaudible]

The President. *Vamos a ganar. Mis amigos Latinos estan aqui.*

Audience members. *Viva Bush! Viva Bush! Viva Bush!*

The President. I’ve got some more I’ve got to say. [Laughter] I’m talking about a hopeful world, and you can’t be hopeful unless the economy grows.

Audience member. [Inaudible]

The President. *Si.* [Laughter] America has got to be the best place in the world to do business. If we want jobs to be created here, this has got to be the best place in the world.

So people say, “What do you mean?” I’ll tell you what I mean: Less regulations, legal reform, an energy policy that encourages conservation and renewables and uses our technology to change how we consume and use energy. But in order to keep jobs here, we have got to become less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

Trade policy has got to be wise. I tell the people, we’ve opened up our markets for foreign goods, and that’s good for consumers. If you’ve got more to choose from,

you're going to get the product you want at a better price and better quality. So what we're saying to places like China, "You treat us the way we treat you." The best trade policy is to level the playing field, because we can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere in this world.

Audience member. [Inaudible]

The President. Okay. *Un momento.* [Laughter] Whoo! Only in New York. [Laughter] I love this city. What a great place—tremendous diversity. *Un momento.* [Laughter]

I've got to talk about taxes. [Laughter] Let me tell you something, if we want the economy to grow, we've got to keep the taxes low. This is an issue in this campaign. The guy I'm running against says, "Well, I've got \$2.2 trillion of new spending, and I'm going to pay for it by taxing the rich." First of all, you can't raise enough money by taxing the rich. Secondly, by running up the top two brackets, you're hurting every S-corp and every limited partnership in America that's creating most of the new jobs in this country. Thirdly, the American people don't buy that, because they understand people hire lawyers and accountants for a reason—[laughter]—to stick them with the tab. [Laughter] He's not going to tax the American people, because we're going to win in November.

A couple of other things about a changing world. Listen, there's a skills gap in America. We've got communities where jobs have left, and there are new jobs being created. And so what we've got to do is fill that skills gap through good policy, Pell grants for community colleges. We've got great ideas to make sure people have the skills necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century. Two out of every four jobs are created—require a college degree. And yet, one in four of the students gets there. It's a problem. That's why I'm for remedial education in high schools. I believe over time we've got to have rigorous exams before they graduate. I want to expand Pell grants so

more people start their careers with a college diploma.

The health care system is an issue. We've got an issue in health care in this country. And there's a great philosophical divide. The guy I'm running against, Senator Kerry, wants to nationalize health care. He wants the bureaucrats to make the decisions for the doctors and patients.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Exactly what he's for. For example, he wants to crowd out small businesses—health insurance for small businesses by raising Medicare, putting more people on Medicaid. That's just bad policy, in my judgment. The best way to deal with health care is to make sure the poor have got health care at places like community health centers, is to expand the children's health insurance programs to take care of low-income families that need help, is to expand health savings accounts, is to promote association health care plans so small businesses can pool risk, get insurance at the same rate that big businesses get.

I'll tell you what else needs to happen, we've got to stop these frivolous lawsuits that are running good docs out of business. It's an issue in this campaign. Everywhere I go, people that understand the high cost of medicine occurs because of these frivolous lawsuits. They also understand they're having trouble finding good docs. You talk to what it's like—to people what it's like to be an ob-gyn here in America these days. Many young pregnant moms are having troubling finding an ob-gyn. They travel miles to get the help they need. I don't think you can be pro-doctor and pro-patient and pro-trial-lawyer at the same time. I think you have to make a choice. I think you've got to make a choice, and I made my choice. I'm standing with the docs, and I'm standing with the patients. I am for medical liability reform—now.

I'm going to talk about Social Security in this campaign. I'm going to remind the seniors who are on Social Security, you're fine. You don't have to worry. The trust

has got you taken care of. Baby boomers like me are fine when it comes to Social Security. But we need to be worrying about our children and grandchildren. That's who we need to be worrying about when it comes to retirement. I believe younger workers ought to take some of their tax money and set it aside as personal savings accounts so Social Security meets the promise for them, an account they call their own, an account they can pass on to whomever they want, and an account the Government can't take away.

I also will tell you, in times of change, things shouldn't change, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. I believe in a culture of life in which everybody matters and every person counts. I believe in family and marriage, which are the foundations of our society. And I'm going to stand for the appointment of Federal judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law.

This election will also determine how we respond to terrorism, and terrorism is a continuing danger. You know, since September the 11th, we have been on the offense, and we'll stay on the offense. We're pursuing these terrorists around the world, not for pride, not for power, but because the lives of our citizens depend on it.

We've got a clear strategy. We're going to defend the homeland. I appreciate the first-responders in this great city. You know what I'm talking about when it comes to defending the homeland. Police and firefighters and EMS squads of New York City are fabulous people. We're transforming our military. We're strengthening the intelligence services. We're staying on the offensive. We will strike the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here in America.

And we'll work to advance liberty in Afghanistan and Iraq and elsewhere, and we're going to prevail. We'll prevail. If we're steadfast, if we're steady, if we're strong, we'll prevail. I—our strategy is working. Just think about this. Four years

ago, Afghanistan was the home base of Al Qaida; Pakistan was a transit point for terrorist killers; Saudi was fertile ground for terrorist fundraising; Libya was secretly pursuing nuclear weapons; Iraq was a gathering threat; and Al Qaida was largely unchallenged as it plotted and planned for death and destruction. Today, because we acted, because the United States has led, Afghanistan is fighting terror; Pakistan is capturing terrorist leaders; Saudi Arabia is making raids and arrests on Al Qaida leadership; Libya is dismantling its weapons programs; Iraq now has a free army, which is fighting for its freedom; and more than three-quarters of Al Qaida's known leaders and associates have been brought to justice.

Progress involved careful diplomacy, clear moral purpose, and some tough decisions. And the toughest came on Iraq. Saddam Hussein was a sworn enemy of America. He was firing weapons at American pilots, which were enforcing the world's sanctions. He harbored terrorists. Abu Nidal was a coldblooded terrorist killer who killed Leon Klinghoffer. Abu Nidal and his organization was in Iraq. Zarqawi, the person who likes to behead people in order to shake our will, was in Baghdad. He had a network of people in that country.

Saddam Hussein paid the families of suicide bombers. Saddam Hussein possessed and used weapons of mass destruction. He was a threat. We had been to war with him once. He was hoping the world would turn away and not watch him. I went to Congress and said to Congress, "We see a threat." And I went to Congress because after September the 11th, our Nation must think differently. We must take threats seriously before they fully materialize. Prior to September the 11th, we would see a threat, and say, "Well, it may come to hurt us or may not. We can deal with it if we want, or we can ignore it." No longer do we have the luxury of doing that in this country. It is essential that this country never forget that lesson.

So with that in mind, I went to Congress. They looked at the same intelligence I looked at. They remembered the same history I remembered, and they concluded that Saddam Hussein was a threat. And they authorized the use of force. Now, before a President ever uses force, he ought to try all options in order to deal with the threat. Listen, committing troops into harm's way is, by far, the toughest decision I'll ever have to make, and it's a serious decision. And I was hoping that diplomacy would work. So I went to the United Nations. They looked at the same intelligence. They concluded, 15 to nothing, that Saddam Hussein must disclose, disarm, or face serious consequences.

I believe when a President speaks, he must mean what he says. And I believe when an international body speaks, it must mean what they say. Saddam Hussein—he ignored the resolution, just as he had for over a decade. He was hoping the world would forget him. He was hoping we would grow tired and weary. But we weren't growing tired and weary, because we remember the lessons of September the 11th, 2001. He also systematically deceived the inspectors.

So I have a choice to make at this point in time. Diplomacy had failed. He had been given his choice, his last option to listen to the demands of the free world. He ignored that option. So I have a choice: Do I forget the lessons of September the 11th and take the word of Saddam Hussein, or take action to defend this country? Given that choice, I will defend our country every time.

Listen, I thought we would find stockpiles of weapons. Everybody did. But Saddam still had the capability of making weapons, and he could have passed that capability on to a terrorist enemy. And that's a risk we could not afford to take. Knowing what I know today, I would have made the same decision. And our country is better off with Saddam Hussein sitting in a prison cell. And as a result of defend-

ing ourselves, as a result of defending ourselves, 50 million people are free.

Think about what's happening in Afghanistan. Listen, 3 years ago, Afghanistan was a place where many young girls couldn't go to school because the Taliban were so backward and so barbaric. And their moms were pulled out in the public square and whipped and sometimes killed in a sports stadium because they wouldn't toe the line of these people that have only the darkest of visions. Today, 10 million citizens, 41 percent of whom are women, have registered to vote in the upcoming Presidential election in Afghanistan. It's unbelievable. It's powerful. What a powerful, powerful statement.

Think about that. There were people who said, "Oh, well, maybe some people don't want to be free in this world." Forget it. People long to be free. People from all religions long to be free, from all walks of life, and a free Afghanistan will make us safer.

Iraq—it's tough work in Iraq right now. These killers cannot stand the thought of a free society emerging in Iraq. They understand the stakes. And so do I. They understand a free society in Iraq will be a—stand in stark contrast to their ideology of hate, and it scares them, and therefore, they're willing to kill innocent people. And it's tough work. It's tough work. But Prime Minister Allawi, with whom I'll be meeting tomorrow, and who the country will get to see on TV, is one strong man who believes that Iraq will be free, who believes in the hopes and aspirations of the Iraqi people. There's going to be national elections in January in Iraq. Think about how far that country has come since the days of mass graves and torture.

Remember I told the story at the convention of the seven guys walking in who had had their hands cut off—seven Iraqi men came to the Oval Office. First of all, walking in the Oval Office is not easy. It's a powerful place. These guys walk in there,

and they're overwhelmed by the environment. I was overwhelmed by them. They'd come to America to get new hands put on. Fantastic story, to think about the contrast in societies. They—and I talked to them—they longed for freedom. Let me tell you something, when you build a free society, the institutions will be bigger than the people, and no longer will a dictator be able to cut off your hand just because he feels like it.

We'll stand with the people of Afghanistan and Iraq. When this country gives its word, it will keep its word. And our strategy is clear—our strategy is clear. We're going to train the Iraqis and the Afghan citizens so they can defend themselves. And that's what we're doing, so they can do the hard work.

Audience member. [Inaudible]

The President. Gracias. [Laughter] She kind of shook me there for a minute—[laughter]—just as I was getting to the strategy. [Laughter] We're going to train the troops. We're going to put them on the path to stability and democracy, and as quickly as we can, our troops will come home with the honor they earned.

We've got a great military, by the way. I can't tell you how proud I am. We're going to support them. We'll support those in our military. We have a duty in this country to support those we put in harm's way. That's why, a year ago, I went to the Congress and asked for \$87 billion of supplemental funding. And it was vital funding. This was not only for folks in Iraq. This was for troops in Afghanistan as well. And the support was strong for that piece of legislation, because most people in the Congress understood how vital it was. Only 12 Senators voted against it, 2 of whom are my opponent and his runningmate. [Laughter]

And when you're out there campaigning, remind them, four people voted to authorize the—four Senators voted to authorize the use of force and not fund our troops.

Two of those were my opponent and his runningmate.

So they said to him, "Why?" And he said, "I actually did vote for the \$87 billion, before I voted against it." [Laughter] You know what else? They kept pressing him, and he said finally, "The whole thing is a complicated matter." [Laughter] There's nothing complicated about supporting the men and women in the uniform.

The President of the United States must speak clearly and mean what he says. In order for this world to be peaceful, we must mean what we say. And it's important not to send mixed signals around the world. Today my opponent continued his pattern of twisting in the wind, with new contradictions on old positions in Iraq. He woke up this morning and now decided, "No, we shouldn't have invaded Iraq." [Laughter] After, last month, saying he would still have voted for using force, knowing everything we know today. He believes our national security would be stronger with Saddam Hussein in power, not in prison.

Today he said, and I quote, "We have traded a dictator for a chaos that has left America less secure." Direct quote.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I—anyway. [Laughter] You cannot—it's hard to imagine a candidate running for President who prefers the stability of a dictatorship to the hope and security of democracy. If I might, I'd like to read a quote he said last December: "Those who doubted whether Iraq or the world would be better off without Saddam Hussein and those who believe we are not safer with his capture, don't have the judgment to be President or the credibility to be elected President." I couldn't have put it better.

I look forward to my meeting with Prime Minister Allawi. It's an important meeting, because I'm going to remind him, so long as I'm the President, we're going to stand with the people of Iraq. It's in our interests that we do so. I believe in the transformational power of liberty. I believe that

it's possible to take a society that was so hopeless because of the tyranny that they have been through and encourage them through democracy that they'll become strong allies in the war on terror. That's what I believe.

I believe that—I believe in the power of liberty because I have worked closely with Prime Minister Koizumi, who I also will be working with today. Think about this for a minute. When you hear the skeptics and doubters talk about our policies, think about the fact that I sit down with the Prime Minister of Japan as a friend. Now, it wasn't all that long ago that my dad and your dads and grandfathers were fighting the Japanese as a sworn enemy. And after that war was over, fortunately, Harry Truman and other American citizens believe that liberty could transform an enemy into an ally and work with Japan to develop a Japanese style democracy.

And as a result of that faith in the power of liberty, today I sit down with Prime Minister Koizumi—tomorrow I'll actually sit down with him—and talk about keeping the peace, talking about the peace that we all yearn for. Liberty is powerful.

Someday, an American President is going to be sitting down with the duly elected leader of Iraq talking about the peace. People who are desperate for hope will be looking at the Iraq model and saying, "That's possible for me." The Palestinians will realize that their failed leadership, the leadership that has failed them for decades, must change, in order for them to have a hopeful, peaceful life.

No, liberty is powerful. It will serve as the beacon. These are historic times. In the short term, we'll defend ourselves by staying on the offense. In the long term, we'll work to spread liberty. And I believe people yearn to be free. Freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world. That's what I believe.

This young century will be liberty century. We're going to reform the systems

of Government so people will be free to be able to realize their dreams, to be able to achieve the great hope of this country. We're going to continue to lead the world for freedom and peace.

I want to tell you, I assure you that I'll never forget the day that Rudy and George and I were in the ruins of the Twin Towers. It was September the 14th, 2001. It's a day that—that day might as well have happened yesterday as far as I'm concerned. It is still so vivid in my memory, particularly the workers in the hardhats screaming at all of us, particularly me, I think, "Whatever it takes." That's what they were yelling at the top of their lungs. We did our best to console people, to hug people, to cry with people, to thank people for their work. A guy looked me right in the eye, and he said, "Do not let me down." Since that day, I wake up every morning trying to figure out how best to protect our country. I will never relent in defending America, whatever it takes. [*Applause*]

Finally—*un momento. Por fin, uno mas te dije*. When I campaigned in New York and around the country, I said, if you gave me the honor of serving as the President, I would uphold the honor and the dignity of the office. With your help and thanks to your contributions tonight, I will continue to do so for 4 more years.

God bless. Thanks for coming. On to victory. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:02 p.m. at the Sheraton Hotel of New York. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. George E. Pataki of New York, his wife, Elizabeth "Libby," and their daughter, Emily; former Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani of New York City, and his wife, Judith; Howard Mills, senatorial candidate in New York; Al Hoffman, finance chairman, and Mercer Reynolds, 2004 Victory national finance chairman, Republican National Committee; Alexander F. "Sandy" Treadwell, chairman, New York Republican

State Committee; Mike Long, chair, Conservative Party of New York State; 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 Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Manmohan Singh of India in New York City *September 21, 2004*

President Bush. I've really been looking forward to meeting the Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Singh. Thank you.

President Bush. He's the leader of a great country and the leader of a friend of the United States.

And I'm proud you're here, sir.

Prime Minister Singh. Thank you, Mr. President. I'm very, very happy to be in this land of opportunity that the United States is. And under your distinguished

leadership, our two countries' relations have grown in diverse ways, but I do believe that the best is yet to come.

President Bush. Yes, sir. [Laughter] Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:08 a.m. at the Waldorf-Astoria. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to the United Nations General Assembly in New York City *September 21, 2004*

Mr. Secretary-General, Mr. President, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen: Thank you for the honor of addressing this General Assembly. The American people respect the idealism that gave life to this organization. And we respect the men and women of the U.N., who stand for peace and human rights in every part of the world. Welcome to New York City, and welcome to the United States of America.

During the past 3 years, I've addressed this General Assembly in a time of tragedy for my country and in times of decision for all of us. Now we gather at a time of tremendous opportunity for the U.N. and for all peaceful nations. For decades, the circle of liberty and security and development has been expanding in our world. This progress has brought unity to Europe,

self-government to Latin America and Asia, and new hope to Africa. Now we have the historic chance to widen the circle even further, to fight radicalism and terror with justice and dignity, to achieve a true peace founded on human freedom.

The United Nations and my country share the deepest commitments. Both the American Declaration of Independence and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaim the equal value and dignity of every human life. That dignity is honored by the rule of law, limits on the power of the state, respect for women, protection of private property, free speech, equal justice, and religious tolerance. That dignity is dishonored by oppression, corruption, tyranny, bigotry, terrorism, and all violence against the innocent. And both of our founding documents affirm that this bright