

empower Government. I want to use Government to empower people.

Since September the 11th, 2001, I have led a global campaign to protect the American people and bring our enemies to account. We have tripled spending on homeland security and passed the PATRIOT Act to help law enforcement and intelligence stop terrorists inside the United States. We removed terror regimes in Afghanistan and Iraq, and now both nations are on the path to democracy. We shut down a black-market supplier of deadly weapons technology and convinced Libya to give up its weapons of mass destruction programs. And more than three-quarters of Al Qaida's key members and associates have been detained or killed.

In the middle of a war, Senator Kerry is proposing policies and doctrines that would weaken America and make the world more dangerous. He's proposed the Kerry doctrine, which would paralyze America by subjecting our national security decisions to a "global test." He supports the International Criminal Court, where unaccountable foreign prosecutors could put American troops on trial in front of foreign judges. And after voting to send our troops into combat in Afghanistan and Iraq, he voted against the body armor and bullets they need to win.

For all of Senator Kerry's shifting positions on Iraq, one thing is clear: If my

opponent had his way, Saddam Hussein would be sitting in a palace today, not a prison, and Iraq would still be a danger to America. As chief weapons inspector Charles Duelfer testified this week, and I quote, "Most senior members of the Saddam Hussein regime and scientists assumed that the programs would begin in earnest when sanctions ended, and sanctions were eroding." Instead, because our coalition acted, Iraq is free; America is safer; and the world will be more peaceful for our children and our grandchildren.

I will keep this Nation on the offensive against terrorists, with the goal of total victory. I will keep our economy moving so every worker has a good job, quality health care, and a secure retirement.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:20 a.m. on October 8 at a private residence in St. Louis, MO, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 9. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 8 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Charles Duelfer, Special Advisor to the Director of Central Intelligence. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks in Waterloo, Iowa October 9, 2004

The President. Thank you all for coming.

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

The President. Thank you all for being here. What a beautiful day here in the great State of Iowa. Thanks for coming out to say hello. It's good to be in the home of tall corn, good tractors, and great people.

You know, I remember coming to Waterloo quite a few times before—one or two times before, in the 2000 campaign. And it's always good to be back. The crowds are bigger, and so is the entourage. [Laughter]

You know, we're getting closer to voting time here, and I'm here to ask for your vote, and I'm here to ask for your help.

There's no doubt in my mind, with your help, we'll carry Iowa and win a great victory in November.

Some other people were voting today around the world. As we meet here this morning, a really great thing is happening in Afghanistan. The people of that country, who just 3 years ago were suffering under the brutal regime of the Taliban, are going to the polls to vote for President. Think about that. Just 3 years ago, women were being executed in the sports stadium. Today they're voting for a leader of a free country. A 19-year-old woman, an Afghan refugee who fled her homeland during its civil war, became the very first voter. Here is what she said. She said, "I cannot explain my feelings, just how happy I am. I would never have thought I would be able to vote in this election." Amazing, isn't it? Freedom is beautiful.

And today is an appropriate day for Americans to remember and thank the men and women of our Armed Forces who liberated Afghanistan.

And earlier today I had the opportunity to call and congratulate my friend the Prime Minister of Australia, who won his election as well. Australia is a great ally in the war on terror, and John Howard is the right man to lead that country.

As you can see, I'm keeping pretty good company today. So I said, "Laura, will you marry me?" She said, "Fine, just so long as I never have to give a speech." [*Laughter*] I said, "Okay, you've got a deal." Fortunately, she didn't hold me to that promise. When she speaks, the American people know they're looking at someone who has got great compassion, a great heart. She's a wonderful First Lady.

I'm proud of my runningmate, Dick Cheney. He did a fine job in the debate the other night. I admit, he didn't have the waviest hair in the race. [*Laughter*] I didn't pick him because of his hair. [*Laughter*] I picked him because of his judgment, his experience. He's getting the job done for the American people.

Before I came up here, I had the privilege of saying hello to Jay and Patrick Grassley; that would be the son and grandson of a really fine United States Senator. I told him the other day in Des Moines that we've got a big yard there at the White House. [*Laughter*] If he's looking for something to do—[*laughter*—bring those mowers over. [*Laughter*]

I appreciate Congressman Jim Nussle for his leadership. He's a fine, fine, fine leader.

I appreciate Mayor Tim Hurley of Waterloo, Iowa. I appreciate you coming, Mr. Mayor. Now, I understand the mayor didn't ask me for any advice, but I'm going to give him some. [*Laughter*] Fill the potholes. [*Laughter*] I'm honored you're here, Mr. Mayor. Thank you for your service.

I want to thank all the other State and local officials. I want to thank the people who are running for office. I want to thank Dave Roederer, who is the Bush-Cheney State campaign chairman. I want to thank Leon Mosley. I want to thank the grass-roots activists who are here. I want to thank the people who are putting up the signs and making the phone calls, doing the hard work to turn out this vote. I want to thank the Sonny Burgess Band for being here. I'm honored you all are here. Appreciate you coming.

We had a great debate last night. It highlighted some of the fundamental differences on issues from jobs to taxes to health care to our national security. Much as he tried to obscure it, on issue after issue my opponent showed why he earned the ranking of the most liberal Member of the United States Senate. Several of the statements last night simply don't pass the credibility test.

With a straight face, he said, "I have only had one position on Iraq." [*Laughter*] I could barely contain myself. [*Laughter*] He must think we've been on another planet. [*Laughter*] In the spring of 2003, as I ordered the invasion of Iraq, Senator Kerry said, "It was the right decision." Now he says, "It's the wrong war," and he tries

to tell us he's had only one position. He can run, but he cannot hide.

With another straight face, he tried to tell Americans that when it comes to health care, his health care plan, and I quote, "The Government has nothing to do with it." Eight out of ten people who get health care under Senator Kerry's plan would be placed on a Government program. He can run, but he cannot hide.

And then Senator Kerry was asked to look into the camera and promise he would not raise taxes for anyone who earns less than \$200,000 a year. The problem is, to keep that promise he would have to break almost all of his other ones. [Laughter] His plan to raise taxes on the top two income brackets would raise between \$600 billion by our estimates and \$800 billion by his. But his health care plan alone costs 1.2 trillion. See, you can't have it both ways. To pay for big spending programs he's outlined during his campaign, he will have to raise your taxes. He can run, but he cannot hide.

You know, after listening to the litany of complaints and the dour pessimism, it took all I could do not to make a bad face. [Laughter] Much of what my opponent said last night is contradicted by his own records. Twenty years of votes have earned him the "most liberal" label.

I have a different record and a very different philosophy. I am a compassionate conservative. As your President, I have worked to make America more hopeful and more secure. I have led our country with principle and resolve, and that is how I will lead this Nation for 4 more years.

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

The President. I'm looking forward to the campaign coming down the stretch. I like to get out with the people. I like to tell the people what I believe and where I stand. I believe every child can learn and every school must teach. I went to Washington, DC, to challenge the soft bigotry of low expectations. We've raised standards.

We're measuring early, to solve problems before it's too late. We're ending the old practice of just shuffling students through school whether they can read and write and add and subtract. And we're making progress. We're closing an achievement gap in America, and we're not going to go back to the old days of failure and mediocrity.

I believe we have a moral responsibility to honor our seniors with good health care. I went to Washington to solve problems, not to pass them on to future Presidents and future generations. We had a problem in Medicare. Medicine was changing, but Medicare wasn't. For example, Medicare would pay tens of thousands of dollars for heart surgery but wouldn't pay a dime for the prescription drugs that would prevent the heart surgery in the first place. We worked together with Republicans and Democrats; I worked with Chuck Grassley to make sure Iowa's rural hospitals got help in the Medicare program. We've strengthened and modernized Medicare for our seniors. Beginning in 2006, all seniors can get prescription drug coverage. We're helping our seniors, and we're not turning back.

I believe in the energy, innovation, and spirit of America's workers and small-business owners and farmers. And that's why we unleashed that energy with the largest tax relief in a generation.

When you're out gathering up the vote, when you're out convincing people to come our way, remind them what we have been through. The stock market was in serious decline 6 months before Dick Cheney and I took office. It was an indication of a recession that was coming, and we went through that recession. Then we had some corporate scandals which affected our economy. We passed tough laws. It's now abundantly clear that we will not tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of America. And then we got attacked, and that attack cost us about a million jobs in the 3 months following September the 11th, 2001.

But we acted. We put tax relief in place. And now our economy has been growing

at rates as fast as any in nearly 20 years. The recession was one of the shallowest in American history. The unemployment rate in America is at 5.4 percent, lower than the average of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. The unemployment rate in Iowa is 4.5 percent. The farm economy is strong here in the State of Iowa. More people own a home than ever before in the United States of America. We're moving forward to a more hopeful country, and we're not going to turn back.

I believe the most solemn duty of the American President is to protect the American people. If America shows uncertainty or weakness in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This will not happen on my watch. I'm running for President with a clear and positive plan to build a safer world and a more hopeful America. I'm running with a compassionate conservative philosophy that Government should help people improve their lives, not try to run their lives. And with your help, we're going to win.

Any hopeful society has a growing economy, and I've got a plan to keep our economy moving forward. To make sure jobs are here, to make sure people can find work, America must be the best place in the world to do business. To keep jobs here, we need to reduce the burden of regulations on our business creators and job creators. To create jobs, we got to stop these junk lawsuits that are threatening the small businesses which are creating most new jobs in America.

To create jobs, Congress needs to pass my energy plan. My plan encourages conservation. It encourages the use of renewables like ethanol and biodiesel. It encourages new technologies. It encourages clean coal technology. What I'm telling you is, to keep jobs here we must become less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

To keep jobs here, we got to reject economic isolationism and open up markets around the world for U.S. products, for Iowa farm products. I like it when I hear

people around the world are eating Iowa corn or Iowa soybeans. See, I believe that we can compete with anybody, anywhere, anytime, so long as the rules are fair. And that's why I'm telling countries like China, "You treat us the way we treat you."

To create jobs, we got to be wise about we spend your money. We're going to keep your taxes low. You heard the language last night, "All I'm going to do is tax the rich." We've heard that before in American politics. You know what that means, "tax the rich." The rich hire lawyers and accountants for a reason: to stick you with the tab. We're not going to let him tax you. We're going to win in November.

I'll tell you something else about the Tax Code: It's a complicated mess. It is a million pages long. Americans spend 6 billion hours a year working on their tax returns. In a new term, I'm going to bring people together and simplify this Tax Code and make it more fair for you.

Most new jobs are filled by people with at least 2 years of college. That's what happens in a changing world. Yet only one in four of our students gets there. That's why in our high schools, we'll fund early intervention programs to help at-risk students. We'll place a new focus on math and science. Over time, we'll require a rigorous examination. By raising performance in our high schools and expanding Pell grants for low- and middle-income families, we'll help more Americans start their career with a college diploma.

I'm a big believer in the community college system in America. I believe the community colleges can be used wisely to make sure our workers gain the skills necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century.

In this time of change, we also need to reform our health care system. We had a spirited debate last night on health care. The differences are clear. When it comes to health care, my opponent wants Government to dictate. I want you to decide. I want you to be the decisionmaker. So we have a plan to make sure health care is

available and affordable. I believe in community health centers, places where the poor and indigent can get care. I believe every poor county in America ought to have a community health center. I know we got to make sure our programs for low-income children are fully subscribed, to make sure America's health care system works.

But we've got to do more to make sure health care is affordable as well. Listen, most of the uninsured work for small businesses. Small businesses are having trouble affording health care. To more enable people to be able to afford health care, we ought to allow small businesses to pool risk, to join together across jurisdictional boundaries so they can buy insurance at the same discounts that big businesses can do.

To make sure health care is affordable, we've got to expand health savings accounts, so workers and small businesses are able to save on premiums and people can save tax-free for a health care plan they call their own. To make sure health care is available and affordable, we've got to do something about these junk lawsuits that are running up the costs of health care and running good docs out of practice. You can't be pro-patient, pro-doctor, and pro-trial-lawyer at the same time. You have to choose. My opponent made his choice, and he put a trial lawyer on the ticket. I made my choice. I am for medical liability reform—now. In all we do to improve health care, this administration will make sure the health decisions are made by patients and doctors, not by officials in Washington, DC.

In a time of change, some things don't change. Those are the values we try to live by, courage and compassion and reverence and integrity. In changing times, we'll support the institutions that give our lives direction and purpose, our families, our schools, our religious congregations. We stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every being counts. We stand for marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. We 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 America responds to the continuing danger of terrorism. Since that terrible morning, September the 11th, 2001, we have fought the terrorists across the Earth, not for pride, not for power, but because the lives of our citizens are at stake.

Our strategy is clear. We're defending the homeland. We're transforming our military. I will make sure the All-Volunteer Army remains the All-Volunteer Army. We're reforming and strengthening our intelligence. We're staying on the offensive. We're striking the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home. We will work to advance liberty in the broader Middle East and around the world, because we understand free societies are peaceful societies. And we'll prevail.

Our strategy is succeeding. Think about the world as it was about 3½ years ago. Afghanistan was the home base of Al Qaida. Pakistan was a transit point for terrorist groups. Saudi Arabia was fertile ground for terrorist fundraising. Libya was secretly pursuing nuclear weapons. Iraq was a dangerous place and a gathering threat. Al Qaida was largely unchallenged as it planned attacks.

Because we led, Afghanistan is fighting terror and held a Presidential election today; Pakistan is capturing terrorist leaders; Saudi Arabia is making raids and arrests; Libya is dismantling its weapons programs; the army of a free Iraq is fighting for freedom; and more than three-quarters of Al Qaida's key members and associates have been brought to justice. We have led. Many have joined. And America and the world are safer.

The progress involved careful diplomacy, clear moral purpose, and some tough decisions. And the toughest came on Iraq. We knew Saddam Hussein's record of aggression. We knew he harbored terrorists. We knew he hated America. We knew he had a long history of pursuing and even using

weapons of mass destruction. We know that after September the 11th, we must take threats seriously before they come to haunt us, before they hurt us.

In Saddam Hussein, we saw a threat. I went to the Congress. They looked at the very same intelligence I looked at, and they came to the same conclusion: Saddam Hussein was a threat. And they authorized the use of force. Some Members of the Senate want to forget that vote—or want you to forget it.

Before the United States ever commits troops into harm's way, we must try all means to deal with a threat. I understand the consequences of putting troops into combat. I know what it means. And so I went to the United Nations in hopes that diplomacy would work. The United Nations looked at the issue and passed another resolution. And this resolution said to Saddam Hussein, "Disclose, disarm, or face serious consequences." When an international body speaks, it must mean what it says.

The free world gave Saddam Hussein another chance, a final chance, to meet his demands. And as he had for over a decade, he refused the demands of the free world. He systematically deceived inspectors. So I had a choice to make at this point in time: Do I forget the lessons of September the 11th and take the word of a madman—

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. —or take action to defend America? Given that choice, I will defend our country every time.

We did not find the stockpiles we thought were there. But I want you to remember what the Duelfer report said. It said that Saddam Hussein was gaming the Oil for Food Programme to get rid of sanctions. And why? Because he had the capability and the knowledge to rebuild his weapon programs. And the great danger we face in the world today is that a terrorist organization could end up with weapons of mass destruction. Knowing what I know today, I would have made the same deci-

sion. The world is safer with Saddam in a prison cell.

Because we acted, freedom is on the march. We know what's happening in Afghanistan. And despite ongoing acts of violence, Iraq has got a strong Prime Minister, a National Council, and national elections are scheduled for January. We're standing with the people in Afghanistan and in Iraq because when America gives its word, America must keep its word. But we're doing so as well because it will make us safer. Free societies in the Middle East will be hopeful societies which no longer feed resentments and breed violence for export. Free governments in the Middle East will fight terrorists instead of harboring them, and that helps us keep the peace.

So our mission in Afghanistan and our mission in Iraq is clear. We'll help those leaders train armies so the people of Afghanistan and Iraq can do the hard work of defending democracy. We will help them get on the path to stability and democracy as quickly as possible, and then our troops will come home with the honor they have earned.

We've got a great United States military, and I want to thank the veterans who are here today for having set such a great example. And I want to thank the military families who are here today. I want to assure you, we'll keep the commitment I have made to our troops that they will have all the resources they need to complete their missions. That's why, in September 2003, I went to the Congress and requested \$87 billion in funding for body armor and spare parts, ammunition, fuel, and other supplies necessary for our troops in combat in both Afghanistan and in Iraq. It was really important funding. As a matter of fact, we received great bipartisan support in both the House and the Senate. As a matter of fact, only 12 United States Senators voted against the funding, 2 of whom are my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. When you're out talking up this election and reminding people about the difference in this campaign, remind them there were only four United States Senators who voted to authorize the use of force and then voted against providing the funding for our troops—only four, two of whom are my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. You might remember his famous quote, "I actually did vote for the \$87 billion, before I voted against it." I don't suspect a lot of people in Waterloo, Iowa, speak that way. He's given a lot of explanations for that vote. One of my favorites is when he said, "Well, the whole thing is a complicated matter." There's nothing complicated about supporting our troops in harm's way.

On national security, my opponent has a record of voting against the weapons systems that helped our country win the cold war. He voted to cut America's intelligence budget by 7.5 billion after 1993. And now he says he wants a "global test" before taking action to defend America's security. The problem is, Senator Kerry's own record shows we can never pass that test. In 1990, the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution supporting action to remove Saddam Hussein from Kuwait. The international community was united. Countries throughout the world joined our coalition. Yet in the United States Senate, after the Security Council resolution, Senator Kerry voted no.

Let me tell you how I think the President ought to lead. The President will always work with our friends and allies. We've built strong coalitions. As a matter of fact, I can—I told you I congratulated Prime Minister John Howard today. But I will never allow other nations to veto America's national security decisions.

In the long run, the best way to defend our security is to spread freedom. I believe in the transformational power of liberty. I like to tell people about my friend Prime

Minister Koizumi of Japan. I was with him recently in the United Nations in New York. I said, "By the way, I'm campaigning a lot, and I'm talking about you a lot on the campaign trail. Do you mind?" He said, "Not at all." I didn't ask him if I could tell you his favorite singer was Elvis, which it is. What's interesting about my meetings with him is that, one, we get along great, and Laura and I consider him a friend. But we're sitting down with the head of a country that was a sworn enemy of America not so long ago. My dad fought against the Japanese. I just know a lot of people out here's relatives fought against the Japanese. It was a bloody war. But after the war was over, Harry S. Truman, President of the United States, believed in the transformational power of liberty, believed that liberty could change an enemy into an ally.

Now, there were some people in the United States at that time who didn't agree with that. There were skeptics and pessimists. You can understand why. After a war, there was bitterness about what took place. Some, I'm confident, were saying, "Who cares about the enemy. We won." But fortunately, enough Americans didn't believe that way, and they helped Japan become a democracy. And today, I sit down with my friend Prime Minister Koizumi, talking about how to keep the peace, talking about the peace that we all want for our children and grandchildren.

We'll succeed in Iraq. We've got a plan that will work. I believe strongly the Iraqi people want to live in a free society, and someday a duly elected leader of Iraq will be sitting down with the President of the United States, talking about how to keep the peace. And our children and our grandchildren will be better off for it.

I believe that millions in the Middle East plead in silence for their freedom. I believe women want to grow up in a free society and raise their children in a free society. I believe that given a chance, the people in the Middle East will embrace the most honorable form of government ever devised

by man. I believe all these things because freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

For all Americans, these years in our history will always stand apart. There are quiet times in the life of a nation when little is expected of its leaders. This is not one of those times. This is a time that requires firm resolve and clear vision and the deep faith in the values that make us a great nation.

None of us will ever forget that week when one era ended and another began. September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. It's a day I'll never forget. I'll never forget the workers in hardhats that were yelling at me at the top of their lungs, "Whatever it takes." I will never forget the man who had been in the rubble looking for a friend, who came out and grabbed me by the arm, and he said, "Do not let me down." Ever since that day, I wake up every morning thinking about how to better protect our country. I will never relent in defending America, whatever it takes.

You know, 4 years ago when I traveled your great State in the caucuses and then in the general election, I made a pledge that if you gave me the chance to serve, I would uphold the honor and the dignity of the office to which I had been elected. With your help, with your hard work, I will do so for 4 more years.

God bless. Thank you for coming. I'm honored you're here. Thank you all for being here.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:13 a.m. at Riverfront Stadium. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister John Howard of Australia; David Roederer, Iowa State chair, Bush-Cheney '04, Inc.; Leon Mosley, State cochair, Republican Party of Iowa; entertainer Sonny Burgess; Charles Duelfer, Special Advisor to the Director of Central Intelligence; Prime Minister Ayad Allawi of the Iraqi Interim Government; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan. He also referred to the "Comprehensive Report of the Special Advisor to the DCI on Iraq's WMD," issued September 30.

Remarks in Chanhassen, Minnesota October 9, 2004

The President. Thank you all. Thank you all for being here. What a beautiful day.

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

The President. Thank you all. It turns out I am the first sitting President ever to visit Chanhassen, Minnesota. All the other ones missed out on a beautiful part of America. Thank you for coming out today. I'm here asking for the vote, and I'm here to ask for your help in getting that vote out. There is no doubt in my mind, with your help, we will carry Minnesota and win a great victory in November.

We're getting close to voting time here in America, and today a great thing happened in Afghanistan. The people of that country, who just 3 years ago were suffering under the brutal regime of the Taliban, went to the polls to vote for their President. A 19-year-old woman, an Afghan refugee who fled her homeland during its civil war, became the very first voter. It's amazing, isn't it? She said, "I cannot explain my feelings, just how happy I am. I never would have thought I'd be able to vote in this election." Freedom is beautiful. Freedom is on the march.