

for it. We believe that people want 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.

Over the next 4 years, we've got work to do to make sure our families are secure and prosperous and our children are educated. And we've also got work to do to defend the values that are important for our country. I believe marriage is a sacred commitment. I believe marriage and family are the foundations of our society. I believe in a culture of life in America. I proudly signed the ban on partial-birth abortion. I will name judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law.

My opponent has a different view. He voted against the Defense of Marriage Act, and he voted against the ban on partial-birth abortion.

*Audience members.* Boo-o-o!

*The President.* The way I heard it, he says he's going to have a litmus test for his judges. He also went on to say that, one time in this campaign, that the heart and soul of America can be found in Hollywood.

*Audience members.* Boo-o-o!

*The President.* The heart and soul of America is found in caring communities like Dayton, Ohio.

I'm optimistic about the future of this country. I know we can overcome any problem that faces us, because I know the

American people. I know the strength and courage and compassion of the people who live in this land.

You know, one of my favorite quotes is written by a fellow Texan named Tom Lea. He said, "Sarah and I live on the east side of the mountain. It is the sunrise side, not the sunset side. It is the side to see the day that is coming, not to see the day that is gone." You know, in the course of this campaign, my opponent has been talking about the day that is gone. I'm talking about the day that is coming.

And I see a great day coming for America. I see a hopeful day. And I see the fact that the hard work we've done is paying off. I see peace coming as well, peace for our children and our grandchildren.

You know, when I campaigned across your State, I made this pledge, that if I won in 2000, 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. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:10 p.m. at the Hara Complex. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor George M. McKelvey of Youngstown, OH; Chief Justice Thomas J. Moyer of the Supreme Court of Ohio; Mayor Donald K. McLaurin of Trotwood, OH; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

## Remarks in Westlake, Ohio October 28, 2004

*The President.* Thank you all for coming. Thank you all for being here today. I am so honored so many came out to say hello. You've lifted my spirits. I am here in Westlake, Ohio, asking for your vote and your help. I am asking you during the next couple of days to get on the telephone,

to tell your friends and neighbors we have a duty in our free society to vote. We have an obligation to vote. Tell them they need to go to the polls, and when you get them headed to the polls, tell them that if they want a safer America, a stronger America,

and a better America, to put me and Dick Cheney back in office.

I am so honored you are here. My only regret on this beautiful day is that Laura is not here to see the size of this crowd.

*Audience members.* Aw-w-w!

*The President.* I know it. That is generally the reaction. *[Laughter]* “Why didn’t you stay at home and send her?” *[Laughter]* I don’t know if you know this or not, but Laura and I went to the seventh grade together, San Jacinto Junior High. By the way, she went to the same high school at the same time that Tommy Franks did, in Midland, Texas. He’s older, and she’s prettier. *[Laughter]* And so, I met her again—we became reacquainted—and she was a public school librarian when I did so. And she said—I said, “Will you marry me?” She said, “Fine, but make me a promise.” I said, “What is it?” She said, “Promise me I will never have to give a political speech.” *[Laughter]* I said, “You got a deal.” Fortunately, she didn’t hold me to that promise. She’s giving a lot of speeches—she’s speaking in Florida today—and when she does, the American people see a strong, compassionate, great First Lady.

I’m proud of my runningmate, Dick Cheney. I readily concede he does not have the waviest hair in the race. *[Laughter]* You’ll be happy to hear I did not pick him because of his hairdo. *[Laughter]* I picked him because of his judgment. I picked him because of his experience, and he is getting the job done for the American people.

I’m proud and I am honored to be supported by General Tommy Franks. America is safer and the world is better off because of the leadership of this fine American. God bless you, Tommy. And I’m proud to be here with Senator Bob Dole and all the retired officers who are on this stage who represent hundreds of people, former military leaders who are supporting my candidacy. It means a lot. It means a lot to be standing on the stage with people who have served our country so courageously.

Thank you all for coming today, and thank you for your support.

I’ve been traveling today with a fine United States Senator in George Voinovich. Send him back to Washington. He’s doing a great job for you. And so is Mike DeWine. I’m proud to call him friend. I know you’re proud to call him United States Senator.

I want to thank Lieutenant Governor Jennette Bradley. I want to thank Mayor Hruby for joining us. And guess who else is with us today, a buddy of mine I’ve been traveling with across the State of Ohio, the Democrat mayor of Youngstown, Ohio, George McKelvey. He represents a lot of Democrats that are supporting my candidacy. There are a lot of people who understand and remember the great Democrat tradition of Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman and John Kennedy, of standing strong in times of crisis. As the mayor puts it, he didn’t leave the Democrat Party; the Democrat Party under John Kerry left him. And I welcome every Democrat to my campaign, and I’m honored you’re here.

I want to thank all the State and local officials. I appreciate so very much the Fraternal Order of Police folks who are here today. I want to thank you for the endorsement of my candidacy for President.

I know the great Cleveland Indian, Bob Feller, is with us today. I’m honored you’re here. I appreciate my friend Sammy Kershaw for being here today. Thank you, Sammy and Lorrie Morgan, his wife, for coming; thanks for entertaining everybody.

But most of all, thank you all. I’m here to thank you for what you have done and what you’re going to do over the next 5 days. Get on that phone. Tell your friends and neighbors to vote. There’s no doubt in my mind, with your help, we will carry Ohio again and win a great victory on November the 2d.

When people go to the polls, we’ll be choosing the leader of our country at a time of great consequence in our world. We’re at war against the terrorist enemy

unlike any we have seen. We have much more to do to win this war on terror. The primary job of the President of the United States is to protect the American people. If America shows any uncertainty or weakness in these troubling times, the world will drift toward tragedy. This is not going to happen on my watch.

Our economy is in the midst of change and challenge. It can be a time of great opportunity if we have the right policies to strengthen, rather than stall, the economic recovery. We have more to do to make sure people can find work in places like Ohio, more to do to improve our children's education, more to do to make sure health care is available and affordable, more to do to strengthen Social Security for a generation to come, and I am ready for the job.

My 4 years as your President have confirmed some lessons and taught me some new ones. The President must have a vision. You must understand where you're going in order to lead this Nation. A President must set clear goals and bring people together to achieve those goals. A President must surround himself with good, capable, strong people, and I have done so.

I have learned to expect the unexpected. History can deliver sudden horror from a soft autumn sky. I've found you better know what you believe or you risk being tossed to-and-fro by the flattery of friends or the chorus of the critics. I've been grateful for the lessons I've learned from my parents, respect every person, do your best, live every day to its fullest. I have been strengthened by my faith and humbled by its reminder that my life is part of a much bigger story.

I have learned firsthand how hard it is to send young men and women into battle, even when the cause is right. I've been reminded that the world looks to America for leadership and that it is crucial for America's President to be consistent. I've learned America's President must base decisions on principle, core convictions from

which you will not waver. The issues vary; the challenges are different every day as your President. Tactics and strategy will be flexible, but a President's convictions must be steady, and they must be true.

As Presidents from Abraham Lincoln to Franklin Roosevelt to Ronald Reagan so clearly demonstrated, a President cannot blow in the wind. A President has to make tough decisions and stand by them. That is how I have led our country, and that is how I will continue to lead our country for 4 more years.

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

*The President.* The President must not follow the path of the latest polls. The President must lead based on conviction and conscience. Especially in a time of war, mixed signals only confuse our friends, embolden our enemies. Mixed signals are the wrong signals for an American President to send.

When America chooses a President, you choose not just a set of positions on issues or a philosophy or record; you choose a human being who comes with strengths and weaknesses. One of the things I've learned about the Presidency is whatever your strengths are, you are going to need them, and whatever your shortcomings are, people are going to notice them. *[Laughter]* Sometimes I'm a little too blunt. I get that from my mother. *[Laughter]* Sometimes I mangle the English language. I get that from my father. *[Laughter]* But Americans have learned that even when you disagree with me, at least you know what I believe and where I stand.

You cannot say that about my opponent. Senator Kerry has taken a lot of different positions, but he rarely takes a stand. He has run a campaign of contradictions. I think it's fair to say consistency has not been the Senator's strong suit. He was for the PATRIOT Act and the No Child Left Behind Act until he was against key provisions of both of them. He voted to authorize the use of force in Iraq and then said

I was wrong to use that force. When I sent troops to Iraq to remove Saddam Hussein from power, he said it was the right decision. Now he says it's the wrong war. During one of our debates, he said Saddam Hussein was a threat. Then a couple of answers later, he said there was no threat in Iraq.

This last year, American troops in Afghanistan and Iraq needed \$87 billion to support them in their missions. First, Senator Kerry said on national TV, "It would be irresponsible to vote against the troops." Then he did that irresponsible thing and voted against the troops.

*Audience members.* Boo-o-o!

*The President.* You might remember perhaps the most famous quote of the 2004 campaign when they asked him about that vote, when he said this: "I actually did vote for the 87 billion, before I voted against it." I haven't spent nearly as much time in these parts as you have, but I think you're going to have trouble finding anybody in Westlake who talks that way.

He's given a lot of answers about that vote. One of the most interesting ones of all is when he said, "The whole thing was a complicated matter." My fellow Americans, there's nothing complicated about supporting our troops in combat.

You have to wonder why he's taken such dramatically different positions in different places in different times in this campaign. Well, here's two reasons why, and it's important for the Ohio voters to understand this. Senator Kerry changes positions because he's willing to say anything he thinks will help him politically at the time. And he does so to try to obscure a 20-year record of out-of-the-mainstream votes that leads to this conclusion: Senator Kerry has been on the wrong side of defining national security and domestic policy debates for the last two decades. That is his record. He can run, but he cannot hide.

Several times during the course of this campaign, the Senator has changed his position for political convenience. The Senator

recognized Saddam Hussein was a threat and authorized the use of force, until his Democratic opponent Howard Dean began gaining ground as an antiwar candidate. The Senator decided he had to appeal to that wing of his party. So he voted against the troops after voting to put them at risk in the first place. The Senator was all for removing Saddam Hussein when we went into Baghdad and very supportive when we captured him. After all, the polls showed that was popular at the time. [Laughter] When the going got tough, when we faced determined opposition and things were not quite so popular, the Senator suddenly wasn't quite so supportive. In fact, he changed his mind entirely, deciding it was the "wrong war at the wrong place and the wrong time."

*Audience members.* Boo-o-o!

*The President.* The voters of Ohio must ask these questions. What does that lack of conviction say to our troops who are risking their lives in the vital cause? What does it say to our allies who have joined that cause? And what does his lack of conviction signal to our enemies? That if you make things uncomfortable, if you stir up trouble, John Kerry will back off. And that's a very dangerous signal in a world of grave threats. The President must be consistent. The President must stand for something.

Just this week, Senator Kerry showed his willingness to put politics ahead of the facts and the truth. He criticized our military's handling of explosives in Iraq, when his own advisers admitted he did not know what had happened. His spokesman has now had to acknowledge that the explosives may have been moved before our troops ever arrived. A President needs to get all the facts before jumping to politically motivated conclusions. The Senator's willingness to trade principle for political convenience makes it clear that John Kerry is the wrong man for the wrong job at the wrong time.

And there's another reason why the Senator changes positions. He doesn't want you to know where he really stands. He

doesn't want you to know where he stands on national security because he has a record of weakness. When Ronald Reagan was confronting the Soviet Union at the height of the cold war, Senator Kerry said President Reagan's policy of peace through strength was making America less safe. History has shown that Senator Kerry was wrong, and President Ronald Reagan was right.

When former President Bush led a coalition against Saddam Hussein in 1991, Senator Kerry voted against using force to liberate Kuwait. History has shown that Senator Kerry was wrong, and former President Bush was right.

In 1994, just one year after the first bombing of the World Trade Center, Senator Kerry proposed massive cuts in America's intelligence budget, cuts so extreme that even his Massachusetts colleague, Ted Kennedy, opposed them. History has shown that Senator Kerry was wrong and—we've got to be fair—[laughter]—Senator Kennedy was right. When you are one Senator among 100, you can be wrong without consequence. The President's opinion—the President's decision decides the security and the fate of our country.

My opponent and I have a different view about how to protect you, about how to make this country secure. He's got a limited, narrow view of the war on terror. Senator Kerry said September the 11th did not change him much at all.

*Audience members.* Boo-o-o!

*The President.* Those are his words, not mine. And his policies make that clear. The Senator says the war on terror is primarily a law enforcement and intelligence gathering operation.

*Audience members.* Boo-o-o!

*The President.* My outlook was changed by September the 11th. I clearly see the threats that we face. A few days after the attack, I stood where the buildings fell. I'll never forget the evil of the enemy and the suffering of our people. I remember that day—clearly remember that day. I remem-

ber the sights and sounds. I remember the workers in hardhats yelling at me at the top of their lungs, "Whatever it takes." I remember looking in the eyes of a man coming out of that rubble who said to me, "Do not let me down." Ever since that day, I've waken up every morning trying to figure out how to better protect our country. I will never relent in defending America, whatever it takes.

There are other things about my opponent's views he doesn't want you to know. I don't know if you remember that in one of those debates. He looked square in the camera when they asked him about his health care plan, and he said, "The Government doesn't have anything to do with it." I could barely contain myself. [Laughter] The Government has got a lot to do with his health care plan. Eighty percent of the people would end up on Government insurance. If you increase the Medicaid limits, it provides an incentives for small businesses not to provide insurance for their employees, because the Government is going to provide insurance for their employees. You're moving people from the private sector to the Government when it comes to health insurance, and when the Government writes the checks, the Government makes the rules. And when it comes to your health care, when the Government makes the rules, the Government starts making decisions for you and starts deciding for your doctors. The wrong prescription for our families' health care is the Federal control of health care.

I have got a better idea. We'll take care of the poor and the indigent through community health centers. We'll make sure low-income children are fully subscribed into the health programs aimed for them. I understand that most of the uninsured work for small businesses. Small businesses ought to be allowed to pool risk so they can buy insurance at the same discounts that big companies can do. We'll expand health savings accounts to help our small businesses and our families. And to make

sure health care is available and affordable, we will do something about the junk lawsuits that are running good docs out of practice and running your bills up.

I was in Canton a while ago and met ob-gyns that could no longer deliver babies. They had to get out of practice because these lawsuits had run their insurance up so high they couldn't afford to stay in practice. I've met too many women around our country who are worried about their baby. They're worried that they can't get the quality of health care that they need. Too many people are driving too far to get good health care because these lawsuits are ruining medicine, as far as I'm concerned. You can't be pro-doctor and pro-patient and pro-personal-injury-trial-lawyer at the same time. You have to make a choice. My opponent made his choice, and he put a personal injury trial lawyer on the ticket.

*Audience members.* Boo-o-o!

*The President.* I have made my choice. I'm standing with the doctors of Ohio. I'm standing with the patients of Ohio. We are for medical liability reform.

The Senator doesn't want you to really know where he stands on taxes, because he's going to raise them. Listen, to be fair, raising taxes is one of the view things that he has been consistent about. *[Laughter]* You might say he's made a habit out of it. He's been in the Senate 90—he's been in Senate 20 years, and he's voted to raise your taxes 98 times.

*Audience members.* Boo-o-o!

*The President.* That's five times every year he's been in the Senate. I would call that a predictable pattern—*[laughter]*—a leading indicator—tells you what he thinks about your wallet. He's also proposed \$2.2 trillion in new spending. That's a lot. That's a lot even for a Senator from Massachusetts. So they asked him, "How are you going to pay for it?" And he threw out that same old tired line, you know, "We're just going to tax the rich." Well, the problem is, is that by running up the top two brackets you raise between 600 and 800

billion dollars, and that's far short of the 2.2 trillion worth of promises. I would call that a tax gap. That would be the gap between what he's promised and what he can deliver. And guess who usually fills the tax gap.

*Audience member.* We do!

*The President.* The good news is we're not going to let him tax you. We're going to carry Ohio and win on November the 2d.

The Senator's record is clear. There is a mainstream in American politics, and he sits on the far left bank. I'm a compassionate conservative and proudly so. I am glad to talk about my record. You know, when I ran for office, I said we would cut the taxes on the American people, and I kept my word. We increased the child credit. We reduced the marriage penalty. We believe that the Tax Code ought to encourage marriage, not penalize marriage. We created a 10-percent bracket to help our working families. We cut the taxes on everybody who pays taxes. We're helping our small businesses, and our economic policies are paying off. This economy is strong, and it is getting stronger.

You remind your friends and neighbors, when you're out gathering the vote, what we have been through. Six months prior to my arrival in Washington, DC, the stock market was in serious decline. That foretold a recession. Then we had some corporate scandals. We passed good law that make it abundantly clear we're not going to tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of America. And finally, those attacks cost us about a million jobs in the 3 months after September the 11th.

But our plans are working. We've added 1.9 million new jobs since August of 2003. Homeownership rate is at an alltime high in America. More minorities own a home today than ever before in our Nation's history. Ohio's farmers are making a living. The entrepreneurial spirit is strong in the State of Ohio. Our small businesses are creating jobs.

I know there's pockets of problems here in this State. I understand that. I've been traveling your State. I know it well. But I want to remind you, in the month of September, the unemployment rate went from 6.3 percent to 6 percent in the State of Ohio. You added 5,500 new jobs in this State. We're making progress. We're going forward, and we're not going to go back to the days of tax and spend.

No, I'm proud to run on my record. When I campaigned for President 4 years ago, I promised to challenge the soft bigotry of low expectations in our public schools. I kept my word. We passed the No Child Left Behind Act, which is a fine piece of legislation. In return for increased Federal spending, we're now measuring. You know why? Because we believe every child can learn in America, and we expect every school to teach. You cannot solve a problem unless you diagnose the problem, and we're now diagnosing problems all across America, and our children are learning to read and write and add and subtract. The math scores are up. The English scores are up. We're closing an achievement gap among minority students, and we are not going to back to the day of low standards and mediocrity in our classrooms.

When I ran for President 4 years ago, I promised to improve Medicare by adding prescription drug coverage for our seniors. I kept my word. Medicine was changing, and Medicare wasn't. We pay thousands of dollars for heart surgery but not one dime for the prescription drugs that could prevent the heart surgery from being needed in the first place. I brought Republicans and Democrats together. We have strengthened and modernized Medicare. Beginning in 2006, all seniors will be able to get prescription drug coverage under Medicare.

Now that you've got me on a roll, let me talk about Social Security. [Laughter] I promised our seniors we would keep the promise of Social Security, and we did. In the 2000 campaign, I remember those—some of those television ads, the fliers that

went out to our seniors that said, "If George W. gets elected, our seniors are not going to get their checks." You might remember those, the shameless scare tactics. Well, George W. did get elected, and our seniors got their checks. And our seniors will continue to get their checks. And baby boomers like me—I see a few of us out there—don't admit it—[laughter]—we're going to get our checks.

But we need to worry about our children and our grandchildren. We need to worry about whether Social Security will be there for them when they need it. That's why I think younger workers ought to be allowed to take some of their payroll taxes and set up a personal savings account, a personal savings account they call their own, that the Government cannot take away.

During the debate, I remember my opponent standing up there saying, well, he's going to protect Social Security. But what he forgot to tell you was, he voted eight times to raise taxes on Social Security benefits.

*Audience members.* Boo-o-o!

*The President.* The good thing about a campaign is, you can run, but you cannot hide.

He also offered nothing for the younger generation. The job of a President is to confront problems, not to pass them on to future Presidents and future generations. In a new term, I will bring Republicans and Democrats together to make sure the Social Security system is strengthened for generations to come.

There's more work to be done. I'm here to ask for the vote and let you know I want to make sure education systems continue to work. We'll expand the high standards to our high schools and expand Pell grants for low- and middle-income families so more children can start their career with a college degree. We'll continue to expand our economy and create an environment for the entrepreneur to flourish, by keeping your taxes low and doing something about

regulations and lawsuits. We're going to make sure that the compassion of America continues to be unleashed through our faith-based and community-based initiatives. And we'll work hard to make sure this country is secure, by not only chasing the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home but by spreading freedom and liberty.

I want to thank you all for bringing your children here today. I want to tell the children something, and I hope parents reinforce this. We—we're changing the world because of our belief in liberty. It wasn't all that long ago in Afghanistan where young girls could not go to school. Think about a society that way. Think about how barbaric and backward the Taliban were. And if their mothers didn't toe their ideological line of hatred, they would be pulled in the public square and whipped; some cases, killed in a sports stadium.

We acted in our own self-interest in Afghanistan. We acted to uphold a doctrine that I explained to the world, that said, "If you harbor a terrorist, you're equally as guilty as the terrorist." When the President says something, he needs to speak clearly and mean what he says in order to keep the peace. And I meant what I said, and Tommy knew I meant what I said. We acted in our interest and removed the Taliban—Al Qaida can no longer train there—but in so doing, millions of people voted in a Presidential election. The first voter in the Afghanistan Presidential election was a 19-year-old woman. Think about that. Think about how that society has gone from darkness to light because of freedom.

Iraq will hold elections in January. Think how far that society has come from the days of torture chambers and mass graves. Freedom is on the march, and America is more secure because of it. And freedom will stay on the march so long as I am your President. I believe everybody yearns 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.

Over the next 4 years, we will work to protect and defend the values that make our country such a unique place. I stand for judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law. I stand for a culture of life in which every being matters and every person counts. I proudly signed the ban on partial-birth abortion. I stand strongly for marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society.

My opponent and I disagreed on these issues. He voted against the ban on partial-birth abortion.

*Audience members.* Boo-o-o!

*The President.* He voted against the Defense of Marriage Act.

*Audience members.* Boo-o-o!

*The President.* As a matter of fact, at one time during this campaign, he actually said he thought you could find the values—find the heart and soul of America in Hollywood.

*Audience members.* Boo-o-o!

*The President.* The heart and soul of America is found right here in places like Westlake, Ohio.

It's an important election. I want to thank you all for coming out and giving me a chance to encourage you to vote and to work the crowd, work the folks—work the folks in your neighborhood and communities—community centers and your coffee shops. Tell the people we have an obligation, and when you're talking to them, tell them I see such a bright future for America. I see a great day ahead for our citizens.

One of my favorite quotes is written by a fellow Texan named Tom Lea. Here's what he said. He said, "Sarah and I live on the east side of the mountain. It is the sunrise side, not the sunset side. It is the side to see the day that is coming, not to see the day that is gone." The course of this campaign, my opponent has spent much of the time talking about the day



that is gone. I'm talking about the day that's coming, a better day for all Americans, a prosperous America, an educated America, a compassionate America, and a peaceful world that we all want.

You know, when I campaigned across your State 4 years ago, I made you this pledge, that if I got elected, I would uphold the honor and the integrity of the office. With your help, with your hard work, I will do so for 4 more years.

God bless. Thank you all for coming. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:50 p.m. at the Westlake Recreation Center. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Tommy R. Franks, USA (Ret.), former combatant commander, U.S. Central Command; former Senator Bob Dole; Mayor Jerry N. Hruby of Brecksville, OH; and Baseball Hall of Fame pitcher Bob Feller.

## Remarks in Yardley, Pennsylvania October 28, 2004

*The President.* Thank you all for coming. I have had a fabulous day today. What a great way to end it. Thanks for lifting my spirits. It is such an honor to be back in Bucks County.

First, I want to thank Ruth Wright, who's the owner of this beautiful farm. And I want to thank her for enrolling the land in the Conservation Reserve Program, to help preserve the open spaces of Bucks County. What a great citizen. What a fantastic contribution to this beautiful part of the world. Ms. Wright, we are honored that you let us all come here. Some of us will stay over afterwards and help clean up. [*Laughter*] I, of course, will be going to another State to keep putting the message out.

I'm here to ask for your vote, and I'm here to ask for your help. We're coming down the stretch. There's not many days left. We have a duty in this country to vote, and I'm asking you to get your friends and neighbors to go to the polls. Tell your friends and neighbors that in a free society, all of us have an obligation to participate in our democracy. Make sure our fellow Republicans get the word. Make sure independents get the word. And don't overlook discerning Democrats. They too want what

we want, which is a safer America, a stronger America, and a better America.

I am sorry that Laura is not with me this evening.

*Audience members.* Aw-w-w!

*The President.* That is generally the reaction. I take it like, "Why didn't you stay home and send her?" [*Laughter*] What a fabulous woman she is. You know, when I asked her to marry me, she was a public school librarian. She said, "Fine, I'll marry you, but make me a promise." I said, "What is the promise?" She said, "Promise me I'll never have to give a political speech." [*Laughter*] I said, "Okay, you got a deal." Fortunately, she didn't hold me to that promise. She was in Florida today giving speeches. When the people see Laura Bush give a speech, they see a strong, compassionate, great First Lady.

I'm proud of my runningmate, Dick Cheney. I do not want to offend anybody here who's follically challenged, but I admit my runningmate does not have the best hairdo in the race. [*Laughter*] I didn't pick him because of his hairdo. I picked him because of his judgment, his experience. He is getting the job done for the American people.

I'm honored to be introduced by Chad Lewis. No, I know you know him as a fine football player. Michele knows him as