

Remarks at a Dinner for Senatorial Candidate Robert Corker and the
Tennessee Republican Party in Nashville, Tennessee
August 30, 2006

Thanks for the warm welcome. Appreciate you treating this Texan with such a warm Tennessee welcome. What Corker didn't tell you was, is that the first choice was Laura for the dinner—[laughter]—who, by the way, sends her love to all our friends and agrees with me that Bob Corker is the right man for the United States Senate for Tennessee.

I think it makes sense to send somebody up to Washington who's not a lawyer. Nothing wrong with lawyers, but we got a lot of them up there. [Laughter] It makes sense to have somebody who understands how the economy works because he was a businessman. It makes sense to send somebody up there who understands how local communities work because he was the mayor of an important Tennessee city. It makes sense to send a man of integrity and decency to Washington, DC. And that man is Bob Corker.

I'm proud to call him friend, and you'll be proud to call him United States Senator. And I want to thank you for your help. I thank you for giving of your money, and I urge you to give of your time. I know there's a lot of grassroots activists who are here. And Bob and Elizabeth are going to be counting on your help coming down the stretch. He's got the message; he's got the courage; but he's going to need you to put up the signs and make the phone calls and go to community centers and remind the good people of this State—Republican, Democrat, and independent—that when you have somebody of his caliber, they need to go to the polls and put him in office.

So thanks for coming. Thanks for organizing this great dinner. And I'm proud to be here. And when Corker gets elected, he's going to be replacing one of the finest citizens your State has ever produced in

Bill Frist. It's been my high honor to serve with him, and we're not through yet. He's going to get back up there in September and make sure we get legislation to help protect this country. It's been a joy working with a citizen like Bill. We're going to miss him in Washington, DC. But I take comfort in knowing that he'll be replaced by a fine citizen of this State in Bob Corker. Mr. Leader, thank you for your friendship, and thank you for your courage.

I'm proud also to be here with members of the Tennessee congressional delegation, Congressman Jimmy Duncan, Congressman Zach Wamp, and Congresswoman Marsha Blackburn.

Earlier, I had the privilege of meeting a man who is running hard for Governor of this important State, and I ask you to support Senator Jim Bryson in his quest to be the Governor of the State of Tennessee. And by the way, Senator, if you want some good advice, you ought to turn to Winfield Dunn or Don Sundquist, members who served—people who served well in this important State. I'm glad those two former Governors are here. Thank you for coming.

I'm also proud to be here with a man who served our country with such distinction as the Senate majority leader and under my administration as the Ambassador to Japan, and that would be Senator Howard Baker. I thank Senator Ron Ramsey for being here. He's the majority leader of the senate. I want to thank all the local folks and State folks who have come. Thanks for running; thanks for serving. I appreciate you working hard to make this State a fantastic place.

I bring a message of optimism to you. I believe, and I know, our party is a political party that trusts the wisdom of the American people. Ours is a party that is

willing to confront challenges instead of passing them on to future generations. Ours is the party with a positive vision that makes a difference for every citizen of this country. I appreciate you supporting the Republican Party as you support Bob Corker.

We face historic times here in this country. These are tough times. They're difficult times because we face an enemy that longs to hurt America. Much of my thinking about the world in which we live, of course, was shaped on that fateful day of September the 11th, 2001. It's a day I'll never forget. It's a day—after that day, I vowed to the American people that we will do whatever it takes to defend this country from further attack. And I need people in the United States Senate standing by—side by side who understand our most important task is the security of the United States of America.

I need people in Washington, DC, who are willing to give those who are responsible for protecting America all the tools they need—tools such as the PATRIOT Act; tools such as programs that say if Al Qaida is calling into the United States, we want to know why, in order to protect the United States of America.

We face an enemy that has an ideology; they believe things. The best way to describe their ideology is to relate to you the fact that they think the opposite of the way we think. We treasure the freedom to worship. We value the freedom for people to express themselves in the public square. We honor the right for people to be able to raise their children in a peaceful society so they can realize their dreams. The enemy we face doesn't believe in dissent. They don't believe in the freedom to worship. They got a narrow view of freedom. But this enemy is particularly lethal because they're willing to use whatever tactic is necessary to achieve their objective.

You know, right after September the 11th, I knew that one of my challenges would be to remind the American people

about the dangers of the world. I knew that the natural tendency for our country would be to hope that the lessons of September the 11th would be faded memory. Earlier this month, thanks to the good intelligence work of Great Britain, and with our help, we uncovered yet another plot, a plot in which these killers who do not share our belief of freedom were willing to take innocent lives in order to achieve their objective.

These are historic times, and we must have people in the United States Congress who understand the stakes. After September the 11th, I vowed to the American people we would use all assets at our disposal to protect you. And the best way to defend America is to stay on the offense against these killers and bring them to justice before they hurt this country again.

We got brave troops around the world who are on the hunt, who are doing their duty to protect the American people. I can't tell you how inspiring it is to be the Commander in Chief of a United States military full of men and women who understand the dangers and have volunteered to serve our country. And we need people in the United States Senate who will make sure that these troops have all the equipment, all the training, all the support they need to do their jobs and protect this country.

In the short run, we'll defend this country by staying on the offense; in the long run, we've got an equally effective weapon, and that is freedom and liberty. The way to defeat an ideology of hate, the way to defeat an ideology that exploits hopelessness and despair, is to spread liberty. It's the calling of our time. The United States of America must understand that freedom is universal, that there is an Almighty, and the great gift of that Almighty to each man and woman in this world is the desire to be free. I strongly believe, deep in the soul of people all across the globe is the desire to live in liberty. I strongly believe that mothers all across the world long to raise

their children in a hopeful society. And it's up to us, working with our friends and allies, to defeat the ideology of hate with an ideology of hope. And that hope is based upon the universal principle of liberty and freedom.

One of the lessons of September the 11th is that this Nation must take threats seriously before they come to hurt us; that we just can't hope anymore that things calm down or that there's a rational way of thinking with an enemy; that we must be bold in our actions in defense of the American people. I saw a threat in Iraq, and so did Members of the United States Congress of both political parties. Saddam Hussein was a state sponsor of terror. Saddam Hussein had used weapons of mass destruction. Saddam Hussein had been shooting at our pilots. Saddam Hussein paid families of suicide bombers. Saddam Hussein was a threat, and the world is better off without Saddam Hussein in power.

And now the central front in the war on terror, the central front in this struggle to protect ourselves, is Iraq. You know, amazing things have happened in Iraq, when you think about it. Oh, I know the news is full with terrible suiciders, and it shakes our will. I know that. It's troubling for many of our citizens, no matter what their political party is. But that's what the enemy wants. They want to trouble us. They're willing to take innocent life to cause us to forget our mission and purpose and the calling of this in the 21st century.

But when you really think about it, amazing progress has been made. Twelve million people went to the polls. These are people who had just recently lived under the thumb of a brutal tyrant who killed hundreds of thousands of his own people. And yet, when given a chance, these Iraqis said, "We want to be free; we want to self-govern; we want a government of and by and for the people." And since then a government has been formed, a unity government headed by a good man named Prime Minister Maliki.

Our task is to stand with those who reject extremism and violence. Our task is to train the Iraqis so they can defend themselves. Our task is to achieve a goal of an ally in the war on terror that can defend itself, sustain itself. And we're on our way to achieving that mission.

Now I understand there's a serious—[*ap-
plause*]*—*there are Saddamists, Al Qaida, extremists, militia, all attempting to stop the advance of democracy. That should say something to the American people: What type of mentality is it that fears freedom? What kind of mentality is it that can't stand the thought of liberty? It's a mentality based upon an ideology that is foreign to our way of thinking. It's a mentality based upon an ideology of hate, and they have aspirations. Their goal—this is what they said, not me—is to drive us out of the Middle East because they want to spread their view, their vision.

If we leave Iraq before the job is done, as some have advocated, this will be a major defeat for the United States of America in the global war on terror. If we leave Iraq before the job is done, it will embolden an enemy that wants to harm the American people. If we leave Iraq before the job is done, it will create a terrorist state in the heart of the Middle East; a terrorist state much more dangerous than Afghanistan was before we removed the Taliban; a terrorist state with the capacity to fund its activities because of the oil reserves of Iraq. If we leave before the job is done, it will shred the credibility of the United States of America. If we leave before the job is done, it will have meant incredibly brave souls will have given their lives for nothing. And if we leave Iraq before the job is done, as General Abizaid has said, "They will follow us here."

The stakes in Iraq are high. It's very important for the American people to understand that the security of the United States of America, the capacity for our children to grow up in a peaceful world, in

large part depends on our willingness to help this young Iraqi democracy succeed.

And we will succeed. And when we succeed, it will be a major defeat for the ideologues of hate. And when we succeed, it will serve—democracy will serve as a powerful example for others in a region that is desperate for free societies. And when we succeed, we'll create a valuable ally in the global war on terror.

Our mission must be to stay on the offense and defeat them overseas so we do not have to face them here at home. This country ought to have confidence in our capacity to succeed. We have faced these kind of challenges before. We have stared down and defeated the ideology of fascism. We won a cold war. The path to victory was never straight-lined, but the path to victory required perseverance, strength of character, and determination. It's important to have Members of the United States Senate like Bob Corker who share that sense of purpose and determination.

You know, recently I was just right down the road here with the Prime Minister of Japan, and he and I went to Graceland. [Laughter] It was an interesting moment. [Laughter] I chose to take my friend Prime Minister Koizumi there—one, I had never been there. [Laughter] So it was a little selfish. Secondly, he's an Elvis fan; he loved Elvis. And I thought it would be fun to take him there. Thirdly, I wanted to send a message to the American people. Imagine somebody in the late forties saying, one of these days an American President will be taking a Prime Minister from Japan to the home of a famous singer. You know, right after that war, you can imagine what the reaction would have been. They'd say, "Man, that guy is off his rocker." [Laughter]

We had fought the Japanese in a bloody, bloody conflict. And it was a brutal war. I find it ironic that my dad fought the Japanese, and yet some 60 years later, I was on Air Force One flying down to Memphis, Tennessee, with the Prime Minister

of a former enemy. And on that plane we weren't talking about Elvis's songs; we were talking about how to work together to keep the peace. We were talking about North Korea. I thanked this good man for sending 1,000 Japanese troops to help the young democracy in Iraq succeed. He understands what I know: Democracy yields the peace.

If we want peace for the long run for our children and grandchildren, we must work hard to spread liberty. Something happened between World War II and my trip to Graceland, and what happened was, Japan adopted a Japanese-style democracy. Democracy and liberty have the capacity to change an enemy into an ally. Someday, an American President will be sitting down with duly elected leaders from the Middle East talking about how to keep the peace, and our children and our grandchildren will be better off.

I appreciate Bob Corker's understanding of the role of government in our economy. He and I know the role of Government is not to create wealth; the role of Government is to create an environment in which the entrepreneurial spirit can flourish in the United States of America. And that means—[applause]—and that starts with letting the American taxpayer keep more of their own money.

Here's what we know: We know that when a soul has more of his or her own money to spend, save, or invest, the economy grows. There's a philosophical difference between what we think and what the other bunch thinks. They think they can spend your money better than you can. We believe the more of the money you have in your pocket, the stronger the economy grows and the more hopeful America is.

And our philosophy is working. Our economy is growing at 4.2 percent annual rate in the first 6 months of this year. That's faster than any other major industrialized nation in the world. For 35 straight months, our economy has added jobs. People are working in the United States of

America. The unemployment rate is 4.8 percent, and since August of 2003, we've added 5.5 million new jobs. The tax cuts we provided for the entrepreneurs and small businesses of America are making a difference for the working people of this country.

Now the question is, how do we keep the economy growing? Well, it starts with making sure the tax cuts we passed are permanent, so Congress can't undo them. We want there to be certainty in the Tax Code. We want people planning their future knowing that taxes will remain low, and I need a man like Bob Corker who understands that.

You know, you hear the talk in the campaign. They say, "Oh, well, we've got to balance the budget." We'll balance the budget, but we're not going to balance the budget and wreck the economy at the same time. You see people say, "The best way to balance the budget"—some in Washington say—"just give us more of your own money." But that's not the way Washington works. If you send more of your own money up there, they will figure out new ways as to how to spend your money. The best way to balance this budget is to keep pro-growth economic policies in place and be fiscally sound with the people's money.

You know, something happened the other day that's interesting. This budget—I said, we'll try to—we'll cut the budget in half, the deficit in half by 2009. We're ahead of goal—ahead of that goal. It's amazing what happens when the economy grows. Guess what happens? More tax revenues come into the Treasury. Pro-growth economic policies work. And I need people in Washington, DC, like Bob Corker who understand, one, you set priorities; two, you eliminate programs that might sound good but don't deliver the results; and three, you help people who can't help themselves. And my number-one priority is making sure we have enough money to defend the United States of America against attack again.

I think it's interesting what Bob Corker said. He said, "America must be the world leader in new technology." Our young people need an exceptional education in the sciences in order to compete for the jobs of the future. You see, the real challenge facing this country is, is to make sure we're the economic leader of the world. I'm not interested in being second place. I think it's—I know it's best for the future of this country that we remain the leader.

And how do you do that? Well, first and foremost, you make sure each child gets a good-quality education. And we're on our way. You know, the No Child Left Behind Act will be up for renewal, and we really need people in the United States Congress who understands the wisdom of that act. And here's the wisdom: It says that we must challenge the soft bigotry of low expectations. We cannot tolerate a system that just simply shuffles kids through school. We must set high expectations and measure to make sure our children are learning to read and write and add and subtract early. And if they're not, we'll provide extra money to make sure no child is left behind.

And I understand people say, "Well, we don't like that; we don't like to be measured; we don't want there to be accountability." There must be accountability in the public schools of the United States of America, to make sure the promise of this country is met.

Senator Frist and I have been working on policies to get us less dependent on foreign sources of oil. It's really the challenge of our time. We have got to use technologies to make us less dependent on energy from unstable parts of the world. It's in our economic interests, and it's in our national security interests. And there's some exciting technologies coming along. One of these days you'll be able to drive the first 40 miles in your car—and it won't look like a golf cart—using a new battery. We'll be using Tennessee crops to power our automobiles.

We must proceed with civilian nuclear power as a source of electricity. We must make sure we promote clean coal technologies. I look forward to having a United States Senator who understands that technology will help us become less dependent on foreign sources of oil.

I've got two other things I want to say; then you'll be liberated. *[Laughter]* One of my most important jobs is to put people on the bench who know the difference between a legislator and a judge. And I thank Senator Bill Frist for his strong leadership in getting two new Supreme Court judges through the United States Senate, Judge Roberts and Judge Alito. There will be more picks to be made. There will be picks throughout all the judiciary. And I need a United States Senator who understands that we need people on the bench who will strictly interpret the Constitution and not use the bench to legislate. And that man is Bob Corker.

And finally, one of the most important initiatives that my administration has pursued is what I call the Faith-based and Community-based Initiative. This initiative recognizes a couple of things: One, the true strength of this country lies in the hearts and souls of the American people. It recognizes there are social entrepreneurs all over America who feed the hungry, provide shelter for the homeless, love those who need love, without one single law emanating out of Washington, DC. I believe Government has an obligation to open its coffers for competitive bidding to faith-based and community-based groups in order to make sure America—America's souls are saved one person at a time.

You know, here is my great buddy, Michael W. Smith. He's an interesting man; he's a good musician, obviously, but he, too, is a social entrepreneur. I remember visiting with Michael's team who helped found what's called Rocket Town. It's an example of what I'm talking about. Rocket Town came into existence because there

was a need to provide a place where people could find love. You see, government is not a loving organization. *[Laughter]* Government is about law and justice. Love comes from the hearts and souls of individuals. And I need a soul like Bob Corker in the United States Senate who understands that many of the social problems we face require something greater than government, require the help of people who hear a higher calling to love their neighbor just like they would like to be loved themselves.

America can change one heart and one soul and one conscience at a time. Government should not fear faith; government ought to welcome the good works of faith-based and community-based organizations to help make this country as strong as it possibly can be.

And so I want to thank you for coming tonight. I'm proud to share the stage with a good man who is leaving the United States Senate. People of this State will be able to say, Bill Frist, job well done. And I'm proud to be serving—sharing this stage with a man who I look forward to serving with, to do what's right for this country. He doesn't need to take a poll; he doesn't need to run a focus group to determine what's right and what we need to do. He'll make you proud. He's the kind of United States Senator you want. It's my honor to endorse and strongly support Bob Corker for the United States Senate.

Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:45 p.m. at the Loews Vanderbilt Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Elizabeth Corker, wife of senatorial candidate Robert Corker; former President Saddam Hussein and Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki of Iraq; Gen. John P. Abizaid, USA, commander, U.S. Central Command; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Remarks on Arrival in Salt Lake City, Utah *August 30, 2006*

War on Terror

Thank you all for coming out. I can't thank you enough for this fantastic Utah welcome. I am delighted to be here in Salt Lake City. My only regret is that Laura is not here to see this great crowd. She sends her best; she sends her love.

I want to thank the Governor for being here today. Governor, thank you for coming. I want to thank your two fine United States Senators, Senator Hatch and Bennett for joining us. I thank Congressmen Matheson, Bishop, and Cannon for being here as well. I want to thank you all for coming.

Most of all, I want to thank you all for staying up a little past your bedtime, for some of you, to greet me.

I'm looking forward to talking tomorrow to our veterans. I'm going to tell the veterans how much America appreciates their service to the United States of America. And I want to thank our veterans for setting such a great example for incredibly fine men and women who wear the uniform of the United States military today.

These are challenging times. I wish I could report to you that all is well, but there's still an enemy that wants to harm the United States of America because of what we stand for. We learned that lesson earlier this month, when, because of the good work of our friends in Great Britain and some of our own help, we stopped a terrorist plot against the United States. This is the challenge of our time and my most important duty. And the most important duty of our Government is to protect the American people from further attack.

We will stay on the offense and defeat the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home. And as we do so, we'll remember the power of freedom and liberty to transform regions of hate to regions of compassion. I believe

there's an Almighty, and I believe the great gift of the Almighty to every man and woman on the Earth is the desire to live in freedom.

Iraq is the central front in this war on terror. If we leave the streets of Baghdad before the job is done, we will have to face the terrorists in our own cities. We will stay the course. We will help this young Iraqi democracy succeed, and victory in Iraq will be a major ideological triumph in the struggle of the 21st century.

I firmly believe we'll succeed. We'll succeed in spreading liberty. And as we do so, we can say that this generation did our duty and laid the foundation of peace for generations to come.

For those of you with loved ones in the United States military, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I can't tell you how proud I am to be the Commander in Chief of such a fantastic group of young men and women. And I'll make this pledge to you: Our Government will make sure your loved ones have all the support, all the help, all the training necessary to do their job of defending freedom, defending America, and spreading liberty that will yield the peace we all want.

So I want to thank you all for coming. It warms my heart to see such a huge crowd. May God bless the great State of Utah, and may God bless America. Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:04 p.m. at the Utah Air National Guard base at the Salt Lake International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jon M. Huntsman, Jr., of Utah.