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The faith of this country—[*applause*]. We're a strong country because of our values. We believe in justice, we believe in human dignity, and we believe in freedom. And it is such an honor to represent this great land.

May God bless you all, and may God bless America. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:29 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; David Kay, CIA Special Advisor for Strategy Regarding Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction Programs; Albert Hentzen, president and chief executive officer, Hentzen Coatings, Inc.; John Stollenwerk, president and chief executive officer, Allen-Edmonds Shoe Corp.; and John R. Weise, president, F. Barkow, Inc.

Remarks at a Bush-Cheney Luncheon in Milwaukee

October 3, 2003

Thanks for coming. Thanks for that rousing Wisconsin welcome. It's such an honor to be back here. It's a great State, full of a lot of really neat people, and I want to thank you for your friendship. And I want to thank you for your contributions and help and prayers. With your help, Vice President Cheney and I came pretty darn close of carrying this State in 2000. There's no doubt in my mind, in 2004 we're going to win the State of Wisconsin. And that victory in Wisconsin is going to be part of a great nationwide victory in November of 2004.

I want to thank you for your help in getting there. I appreciate the fact that you've contributed your money, and now I need you to contribute your time. When you put up those signs at the right time, knock on the doors, when you go to your coffee shops—if you live in a community with a coffee shop—you tell them that this administration is working for everybody. We believe in a hopeful, positive, optimistic vision for every single person who is fortunate enough to live in this country. You tell them that this is an administration focused on the people's business.

You know, I'm loosening up for this campaign. I'm kind of getting ready. [*Laughter*] But the political season will come in its own time. I've got a job to do. I've been entrusted to lead this great Nation, and I will do so. We've got a lot on our agenda in Washington, DC. And what I'm going to do until the political season comes, I will work hard to earn the confidence of every American by keeping this Nation strong and secure and prosperous and free.

Rick, I want to thank you for your leadership and thank you for your kind introduction. I've known Rick for a while. When he says we're going to win, I believe him. And I want to appreciate him energizing the grassroots, and I want to thank all of you grassroots participants for getting ready to go.

I traveled today with a really good, fine friend, a man I'd say you trained well, a person who is making an enormous contribution to my Cabinet and to our country, a person who has got a huge job running the Department of Health and Human Services, and that's Tommy Thompson.

I heard Tommy whispering to somebody; he said, "You know, the campaign made a mistake in sending George W. They should have sent Laura." [*Laughter*] Speaking about Laura, she just got back from a sensitive diplomatic mission. [*Laughter*] You probably saw the picture in the newspaper. [*Laughter*] But I'm proud that she represented our country, because she does it with such class. She is a fabulous First Lady.

She sends her best and sorry she can't be here. Right after here, I'm going to fly back to Washington, and she's organizing a National Book Festival. She loves books. She loves the idea of people teaching kids how to read books, and she's going to herald some of our great authors. She's making an enormous contribution. I'm lucky she said yes when I said, "Will you marry me?" [*Laughter*]

I want to thank the Members of the Congress flying with us today—who flew with us today, and one who met us here today. The chairman, Jim Sensenbrenner, is with us, and it's been a joy to work with Jim. He's a good, strong patriot. Tom Petri is with us today, good, honorable, decent guy. Tom, I want to thank you for your friendship, and I appreciate you coming today. A young star—we've

got some young stars from the State of Wisconsin, people who are making a big difference in the Halls of Congress, and they've done so in a quick period of time. That would be Paul Ryan, the Congressman from this part of the world, and Congressman Mark Green.

I want to thank people from the statehouse who have joined us today. John Gard, who is the speaker of the assembly. Mary Panzer, who is the senate majority leader, is with us today. Mary, thank you for coming. Jack Voight, your State treasurer is with us. Jack, thank you for being here. Scott McCallum, the former Governor, is with us. Scott, I'm honored that you're here. Thank you for coming. And Scott Walker, local man, is with us today. I appreciate you, Scott. Thanks for the good work you're doing.

My friend Mercer Reynolds from Cincinnati, Ohio, who is the national finance chair of the Bush-Cheney 2004 campaign, he's taking time out of his business to travel the country with us and organize this very important fundraising effort we're doing nationwide. Mercer, I want to thank you for coming. Glad you're here.

I appreciate my longtime friend Jim Klauser for taking on the State campaign chairman role for the State of Wisconsin. San Orr is the State finance chairman. Jon Hammes is the State finance cochair. San Orr is the cochair as well. We've got cochairmen here. I'm thankful for your hard work. Thanks for making this event go so well. Mary Buestrin is the national committeewoman from this State. I appreciate all of you all, again, for coming.

I particularly want to say something about the Arrowhead High School Choir. I am glad you're here. Thanks for coming.

In the last 2½ years, this Nation has acted decisively to confront great challenges. I came to this office to solve problems, not to pass them on to future presidents and future generations. I came to seize opportunities and not let them slip away. This administration is meeting the tests of our time.

Terrorists declared war on the United States of America, and war is what they got. We've captured or killed many of the key leaders of Al Qaida, and the rest of them know we're on their trail. In Afghanistan and Iraq, we gave ultimatums to terror regimes. Those regimes chose defiance, and those regimes are no more. Fifty million people—50 million people in those two countries once lived under tyranny, and today, they live in freedom.

Two-and-a-half years ago, our military was not receiving the resources it needed, and morale was beginning to suffer. So we acted. We increased the defense budget to prepare for the threats of a new era, and no one today in the world can question the skill and the strength and the spirit of the United States military.

Two-and-a-half years ago, we inherited an economy in recession. And then we had the attacks on our country, coupled with the march to war, and corporate scandals. All of those events affected the confidence of the American people. But we acted. We passed tough laws to hold corporate criminals to account. And to get the economy going, I have twice led the United States Congress to pass historic tax relief for the American people.

We believe and know that when people have more money in their pocket, more money to spend, to save, or invest, the whole economy grows, and someone is more likely to find a job. We also understand whose money we're spending in Washington, DC. We're not spending the Government's money. We spend the people's money. And we're sending more of the people's money back to them so they can help raise their families. We reduced the taxes on dividends and capital gains to encourage investment. We're giving small businesses incentives to expand their businesses and hire new people.

With all these actions, by being proactive, we're laying the foundation for greater prosperity and more jobs, so that each and every single purpose—person in this country has a chance to realize the American Dream.

Two-and-a-half years ago, there was a lot of talk about education reform in Washington, DC, but there just wasn't much action. So I acted. I called for and Congress passed the No Child Left Behind Act. With a solid, bipartisan majority, we delivered the most dramatic education reforms in a generation. Finally we are bringing high standards and accountability to public schools. We said, in return for the receipt of Federal money,

"Please show us whether or not a child is learning to read and write and add and subtract." We're challenging the soft bigotry of low expectations. We believe in raising the bar. We believe in high standards. We believe every child can learn. And for the first time in Federal history, we're insisting that every child learns. We don't want one single child left behind in America.

We reorganized our Government and created the Department of Homeland Security to better safeguard our borders and ports and to protect the American people. We passed trade promotion authority to open up new markets for Wisconsin's entrepreneurs and manufacturers and farmers. We passed, with the Congress, much needed spending discipline. We passed budget agreements to help hold the line on spending.

On issue after issue, this administration has acted on principle. We have kept our word, and we have made progress for the American people. And the Congress gets a lot of credit. I've got a great relationship with Speaker Denny Hastert. He's a good, solid man. I've got a great relationship with Senator Bill Frist, the majority leader. We're working together; we're working together to get results for the American people. We're working hard to change the tone in Washington, DC. It needs a—it needs a tonal change. There's too much partisan bickering. There's too much zero-sum politics. We need to focus on results, not politics. And those are the kind of people I've surrounded myself with in Washington.

I've put together a fantastic administration for the American people. We've got a great National Security staff, a great economic team. We've got people who have come to Washington to serve the people, not petty partisan politics. Richard B. Cheney is the greatest Vice President our country has ever had. Mother's got a second opinion. [*Laughter*]

In 2½ years, if you think about it—and you tell them at the coffee shops—in 2½ years, this administration has come far. We've done a lot. We've tackled a lot of tough problems. But our work is only beginning. My job is to set great goals worthy of a great nation.

First, America is committed to expanding the realm of peace and freedom for our own security and for the benefit of the world. And second, in our own country, we must work for a society of prosperity and compassion, so that every citizen has a chance to work and to succeed and to realize the great promise of our land. It is clear that the future of freedom and peace depend on the actions of America. This Nation is freedom's home, and we are freedom's defender. We welcome this charge of history, and we are keeping it.

The war on terror continues. There's still people out there that hate America, cold-blooded killers who hate what we stand for. These people are not idle, and neither are we. This country will not rest; we will not tire; we will not stop until this danger to civilization is removed.

We continue to confront that danger in Iraq, for Saddam holdouts and foreign terrorists are desperately trying to throw Iraq into chaos by attacking coalition forces, aid workers, innocent Iraqis. See, they know that the advance of freedom in Iraq will be a major defeat in the cause of terror. This collection of killers is trying to shake our will. They're trying to frighten the civilized world. They don't understand this country. They don't understand this administration. We will not be intimidated.

We are aggressively striking the terrorists in Iraq, defeating them there so we will not have to face them in our own country. We'll call on other nations to continue to help us in Iraq. See, by making Iraq a free country, it'll make the world more secure. We'll stand with the Iraqi people as they assume more of their own defense and move toward self-government. These aren't easy tasks. I know that. But they're essential tasks. We will finish what we have begun, and we will win this essential victory in the war on terror.

Our greatest security comes from the advance of human liberty, because free nations don't support terror. Free nations do not attack their neighbors. Free nations do not threaten the world with weapons of mass terror. Americans believe that freedom is the deepest need and hope of every human heart. And I believe that freedom is the right

of every person, and I believe that freedom is the future of every nation.

America also understands that unprecedented influence brings tremendous responsibilities. We have duties in the world. And when we see disease and starvation and hopeless poverty, we will not turn away. On the continent of Africa, this great Nation is committed to bringing the healing power of medicines to millions of men and women and children now suffering with AIDS. I want to thank Tommy for his good work. He's a part of our great land's leadership. We're leading the world in providing this incredibly important work of human rescue.

We face challenges here at home as well, but we'll be equal to those challenges. First of all, any time anybody who is looking for work and can't find a job is still looking, I think we've got a problem. I will continue to work to create an environment in which the entrepreneurial spirit flourishes, in which small businesses can grow, so that people in America can find work.

I just had a great session with small-business owners here in Milwaukee. The optimism is high. The spirit is strong. We will continue to create the conditions for increased employment in America, so everybody can find a job.

We also need to keep our commitment to America's seniors by strengthening and modernizing Medicare. A few weeks ago, earlier in the summer, Congress took historic action to improve the lives of older Americans. For the first time since the creation of Medicare, the House and the Senate have passed reforms to increase the choices available for America's seniors and to provide coverage for prescription drugs. Tommy's working this issue on the Hill. He's working with the House and the Senate so they can iron out their differences and get a good bill to my desk. We have a duty to America's seniors. We have a duty to those of us who are going to be seniors to make sure that we have a modern Medicare system.

And for the sake of our health care system, we need to cut down on the frivolous lawsuits which increases the cost of medicine. People who have been harmed by a bad doc deserve their day in court, no doubt about it. Yet, the system should not reward lawyers who are simply fishing for a rich settlement. Because of frivolous lawsuits, docs practice defensive medicine, which drives up the cost of health care. And they therefore affect—frivolous lawsuits affect the Federal budget. Medical liability reform is a national issue which requires a national solution. The House of Representatives passed a good bill to reform the system. It is stuck in the United States Senate. The Senators must understand that no one has been healed by a frivolous lawsuit in America.

I have a responsibility as the President to make sure the judicial system runs well. And I have met that duty. I have nominated superb men and women for the Federal benches, people who will interpret the law, not legislate from the bench. Yet some Members of the United States Senate—you might know some of them—[*laughter*]—are trying to keep my nominees off the bench by blocking up-or-down votes. Every judicial nominee deserves a fair hearing and an up-or-down vote on the Senate floor. It is time for some Members to stop playing politics with American justice.

The Congress needs to complete work on a comprehensive energy plan. Wisconsin is a State—it is a manufacturing State. Manufacturers need reliable sources of energy. The manufacturing sector lags in America. And one way to help us was good trade policy that levels the playing field, good tax policy that encourages investment, less regulations.

But as well we need to have an energy plan. I submitted one 2 years ago. This summer, we had a problem with our electricity grid. You might remember that. It should be a wake-up call to the Congress that we need to modernize our ability to move electricity around America. We need to make sure that reliability standards for electricity are mandatory, not voluntary. We need to encourage more investment into modernizing the grid. We need to use our technological capacities to increase conservation, to find new sources of energy. But we need to use the old sources of energy in an environmentally friendly way to make sure we're less dependent on foreign sources of crude. The Congress needs to get an energy bill to my desk. For the sake of

national security and for the sake of economic security, they need to get a bill to my desk soon.

Our strong and prosperous Nation must also be a compassionate nation. I will continue to advance our agenda of compassionate conservatism, which means we'll apply the best and most innovative ideas to the task of helping our fellow citizens in need. There's still millions of men and women who want to end their dependence on Government and become independent through hard work. We must build on the success of welfare reform, to bring work and dignity into the lives of more of our fellow citizens.

Congress should complete the ''Citizen Service Act,'' to encourage more Americans to serve in their communities. And Congress should finally pass my Faith-Based Initiative, to help empower the armies of compassion which exist all across America. The soldiers in that army mentor children; they care for the homeless; they offer hope to the addicted. One of the great strengths of America is the faith of the American people. People of all faiths, Hindu, Muslim, Christian, and Jew, should be welcomed by our Government to help people who hurt, to help save lives. This Government should not fear faith. We should welcome faith.

A compassionate society must promote opportunity for all, including the independence and dignity that come from ownership. This administration will constantly strive to promote an ownership society in America. We want more people owning their own home. We want people to own and manage their own retirement accounts. We want people to own and manage their own health accounts. And we want more people owning a small business. You see, we understand in this administration that when somebody owns something, he or she has a vital stake in the future of our country.

In a compassionate society, people respect one another, and they take responsibility for the decisions they make. The culture of America is changing from one that has said, ''If it feels good, just go ahead and do it,'' and ''If you've got a problem, blame somebody else,'' to a new culture in which each of us understands that we are responsible for the decisions we make in life.

If you're fortunate enough to be a mom or a dad, you're responsible for loving your child. If you're worried about the quality of the education in which you live, you're responsible for doing something about it. If you're a CEO in corporate America, you're responsible for telling the truth to your shareholders and your employees.

And in a responsibility society, each of us are responsible for loving a neighbor just like we'd like to be loved ourself. We can see the culture of service and responsibility growing around us here in America. I started what's called the USA Freedom Corps to encourage Americans to extend a compassionate hand to a neighbor in need. The response has been very strong. Go to the web page and take a look at it, if you're interested in serving your community by helping somebody who hurts.

Our faith-based charities are strong in America. People have heard the call, just like policemen and firefighters and people who wear our Nation's uniform are reminding us what it means to sacrifice for something greater than ourselves. Once again, the children of America believe in heroes, because they see them every day. In these challenging times, the world has seen the resolve and courage of America, and I have been fortunate enough to see the compassion and the character of the American people.

All the tests of the last 2½ years have come to the right nation. We are a strong country, and we use our strength to defend the peace. We're an optimistic country, confident in ourselves and in ideals bigger than ourselves. Abroad, we seek to lift up whole nations by spreading freedom. At home, we seek to lift up lives by spreading opportunity to every corner of America. This is the work that history has set before us. We welcome it, and we know that for our country and for our cause, the best days lie ahead.

May God bless you. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12 noon at the Italian Community Center. In his remarks, he referred to Rick Graber, chairman, Republican Party of Wisconsin; and Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

September 27

In the morning, at Camp David, MD, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The White House announced that on September 26 the President declared a major disaster in Pennsylvania and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by Tropical Storms Henri and Isabel and related severe storms and flooding on September 15–23.

September 29

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building, the President met with congregational rabbis.

September 30

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Chicago, IL.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Cincinnati, OH, where, in the evening, he attended a Bush-Cheney '04 reception at a private residence.

Later in the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

October 1

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he met with Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld.

Later in the morning, in the Oval Office, the President met with President Alvaro Uribe of Colombia.

In the afternoon, the President had a briefing at the Department of Homeland Security.

Later in the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President participated in a photo opportunity with members of the International Space Station Expedition 6 crew and NASA Administrator Sean O'Keefe.

The President announced his intention to nominate Mary Kramer to be Ambassador to Barbados and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador to St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

The President announced his intention to appoint Charles A. Calhoun as Commissioner of the Pecos River Commission for New Mexico and Texas.

The President announced his intention to appoint Maria Pilar Aristigueta as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Christopher Columbus Fellowship Foundation.

The President announced his intention to nominate the following individuals to be members of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science: Jose Antonio Aponte, Sandra Frances Ashworth, Edward Louis Bertorelli, Carol L. Diehl, Allison Druin, Beth Fitzsimmons, Patricia M. Hines, Colleen Ellen Huebner, Stephen M. Kennedy, Herman Lavon Totten, Bridget L. Lamont, and Mary H. Perdue.

October 2

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, the President had lunch with Vice President Dick Cheney. Later, he met with Secretary of State Colin L. Powell.

The President announced his intention to nominate Edward Baxter O'Donnell for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues.

The President announced his intention to designate Rita E. Hauser as a member of the Intelligence Oversight Board, a standing committee of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board.

October 3

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Milwaukee, WI.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.