

Remarks in Latrobe, Pennsylvania
 September 22, 2004

The President. Thank you all very much for coming. I'm proud you all are here. Thanks for coming out to say hello.

How good does it get to be introduced by Arnold Palmer? What a fantastic citizen of our country. I'm proud to be here in his hometown. He said, "Have you ever heard of Rolling Rock?" I said, "I quit drinking." [Laughter]

But thank you all for coming out today. I'm asking for the vote, is what I'm doing here today in Pennsylvania. I like getting out amongst the people and letting them know I've got a reason for running—to serve you for 4 more years.

I'm here to tell you what my plans are for the future of our country. I'm also here to ask for your help. I'd like for you to register your friends and neighbors to vote. We have a duty in this country to vote. Call upon your friends and neighbors to exercise their responsibility. And when you're out registering people to vote, don't overlook discerning Democrats like Zell Miller. And when you get them headed toward the polls, tell them that if they want this to be a safer, stronger, better America, to put me and Dick Cheney back in office.

I'm sorry Laura is not with me today.

Audience members. Aw-w-w!

The President. I know it. I don't blame you. When I asked her to marry me, she said, "Fine, just so long as I never have to give a speech." I said, "Okay, fine, you'll never have to give a speech." Fortunately, she didn't hold me to my word. [Laughter] The people of this country got to see her in New York City giving a speech. They saw how compassionate, strong, and decent she is. She's a great mom, a great wife, a wonderful First Lady. I'm going to give you some reasons to put me back in, but perhaps the most important one of all is so Laura is First Lady for 4 more years.

I'm proud to be running with Dick Cheney. He's a good man. Now look, I admit it. I admit it, he doesn't have the waviest hair in the race. [Laughter] I didn't pick him for his hair. I picked him because he's a man of great judgment, sound experience, and he

can get the job done on behalf of the American people.

Listen, you did a good job of training Tom Ridge. And I did a smart thing by picking him to run the new Department of Homeland Security.

I want to thank the United States Senators who are with me today. I'm here to ask you to put Arlen Specter back in the United States Senate for 6 more years. I'm proud to be traveling with the other Senator, Rick Santorum. I want to thank Congressman Tim Murphy, the Congressman from this district. I call him Murph. I want to thank Congresswoman Melissa Hart from the great State of Pennsylvania for joining us.

I want to thank all the candidates who are here and local and State officials. Thanks for serving Pennsylvania and your communities.

I want to thank my friend Lynn Swann. He and I worked together to try to promote physical fitness. You need to walk. [Laughter] You want to stay healthy, get some exercise. And I appreciate my friend Lynn Swann for supporting my candidacy.

I want to thank John Michael Montgomery for singing here today.

I just came from Millvale, where I saw the devastation caused by the floods of Ivan. I assure you that we're helping as much as we possibly can to help people restore their lives, and that the prayers of the people of this country are with those who suffer.

I'm looking forward to this campaign. I like to campaign, because I like to be with people. I'm looking forward to telling people where I stand, what I believe, and where I'm going to lead this Nation for the next 4 years.

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

The President. I went to Washington to solve problems, not to pass them on to future Presidents and future generations. I saw a problem with Medicare. See, Medicare was—is a very important program, but it wasn't changing with medicine. There was a problem. For example, Medicare would pay \$100,000 to—for heart surgery for a senior but wouldn't pay for the prescription drugs to prevent the heart surgery from being needed in the first place. That's a problem. It's a problem for our seniors, who deserve modern medicine in Medicare. It's a problem

for the taxpayers. So I brought Republicans and the Democrats together to strengthen Medicare. In 2006, our seniors will get prescription drug coverage. We're not turning back to the old days.

When we came into office, the economy was turning south. The stock market had been in decline prior to our arrival. The first three quarters of my Presidency were a recession. We started to recover a little bit, and then we found out some of our citizens didn't tell the truth. Some CEOs forgot what it meant to be a responsible citizen in this country. By the way, we passed tough laws that now make it abundantly clear, we're not going to tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of our country. Then we got hit with an attack, and that hurt us. It cost us about a million jobs in the 3 months after September the 11th.

There was a problem. We're overcoming those problems. We're overcoming those obstacles because our workers are great, our farmers know what they're doing, the entrepreneurial spirit is strong. We're overcoming those problems because of well-timed tax cuts.

Our economy has been growing at rates as fast as any in nearly 20 years. The national unemployment rate is at 5.4 percent, which is lower than the average of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Inflation is low. Mortgage rates are low. You're adding jobs here in the State of Pennsylvania. This economy is growing, and we're not going to go backwards. We're not turning back to the old days.

I believe the most solemn duty of the American President is to protect the American people. If America shows uncertainty and 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 I believe this Nation wants steady, principled leadership. And that's why, with your help, we're going to carry Pennsylvania and win a great victory in November.

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

The President. I believe every child can learn and every school must teach. I went to Washington to challenge the soft bigotry of low expectations. We passed a new law called the No Child Left Behind Act. It raises standards. It uses accountability to solve problems early, before a child simply gets shuffled through the schools. It trusts the local people to make the right decision for the schools and the community in which you live. This law is making a difference. Here in the State of Pennsylvania, 81 percent of the Pennsylvania schools are meeting higher standards. That's up from 62 percent in just one year.

Across this Nation, test scores are rising. African American and Hispanic students are closing the achievement gap here in America. We're making progress in this country, and we're not turning back to the old days of low expectations.

We'll do more to improve education and prepare our children for the future. Listen, we've got a changing job force. Most new jobs are filled by people with at least 2 years of college, yet one in four of our students gets there. That's why, at our high schools, we'll fund early intervention programs to help at-risk students. We'll emphasize math and science so our kids can fill the jobs of the 21st century. We'll reward teachers who gets results for their students. We'll give our best teachers incentives to teach in the neediest schools. Over time, we'll require a rigorous exam before graduation. By raising performance in our high schools and expanding Pell grants for low and middle-income Americans, we will help more of our citizens start their career with a college diploma.

Listen, I understand the world in which we live is changing. Think about what happened over the course of the last couple of decades. It used to be a person would work for one company, have one career. They'd have one pension plan, one health care plan. That person was a man. Today, our workers change jobs and careers, and women are working not only inside the house but outside the house. This workforce has changed, yet the systems of Government have not changed with the times. The pension plans, health

coverage, the Tax Code, and worker training were created in a world of yesterday, not tomorrow. I'm running for President to transform these systems so that all citizens are equipped, prepared, and thus truly free to make your own choices and to realize the great promise of our country.

Listen, I understand a hopeful society is one in which the economy is growing. If we want to keep jobs here in America, America must be the best place in the world to do business. If we want people to find work here, we've got to do something about these regulations and lawsuits that are making it hard on the employers in the State of Pennsylvania.

If we want to keep jobs here, Congress needs to pass my energy plan. Listen, in order to make sure this economy grows, we've got to encourage conservation, the use of renewables such as ethanol and biodiesel. We've got to use—modernize the electricity grid. We've got to use technologies to make sure we can use our coal. I'm for clean coal technology. We've got to use our technology so we can explore for natural gas in environmentally friendly ways. In order to keep jobs here in America, we must be less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

In order to keep jobs, we've got to reject economic isolationism. See, we open up our markets for a—for goods from overseas, and that's good for you. If you've got more—more to choose from, you're likely going to get the good you want at a better price and higher quality. What I'm saying to places like China is, "You treat us the way we're treating you." And I'm saying that because I know we can compete with anybody, anytime, anywhere so long as the rules are fair.

In order to make sure we've got jobs here, to make sure this recovery we have is a sustained—is sustained economic growth, we've got to be wise about how we spend your money and keep your taxes low. Taxes are an issue in this campaign. I'm running against a fellow who has promised \$2.2 trillion of new Federal spending so far.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. That \$2.2 trillion is a lot, even for a Senator from Massachusetts. [Laughter] So they said, "How are you going to pay for it? How are you going to pay for

this new spending?" He said, "We're going to tax the rich." Now, you've heard that before, haven't you? Here's the problem with that. You can't raise enough money by taxing the rich to pay for \$2.2 trillion. There's a tax gap. And guess who always gets stuck with the bill? I'll tell you something else about that language, "tax the rich." The rich hire lawyers and accountants for a reason, so you get stuck with the bill. We're not going to let John Kerry tax you, because we're going to carry Pennsylvania and win in November.

Say something else about the Tax Code. That Tax Code needs to be changed. It's a complicated mess. It's full of special interest loopholes. In a new term, I'm going to bring Republicans and Democrats together to simplify the Tax Code and make it more fair for the American people.

In a changing world, the economy changes, the nature of the jobs change, and oftentimes, there's a skills gap. That's why I'm such a big believer in the community college system. We're going to expand access to our community colleges so our workers are going to be able to gain the skills necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century.

In a changing world, we've got to think about how to provide stability in people's lives. One way to provide stability in a person's life is to encourage ownership. We want more people owning their own home. Do you realize, under my administration, the homeownership rate in America is at an alltime high? Over the next 4 years, we'll continue to expand ownership so more and more people are able to open up the door where they live and say, "Welcome to my home. Welcome to my piece of property."

In changing times, we need to reform our health care system. The costs are rising rapidly. I've got a commonsense, practical plan to make sure health care is available and affordable. When it comes to health care, my opponent wants the Government to dictate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He wants the Government to decide. When it comes to health care, I want you to decide. More than half of the Americans who are currently uninsured are small-business employees and their families. We've got to change law to allow small firms

to pool together so they can purchase insurance at the same discounts that big businesses get.

My opponent opposes association health plans. Those are the plans that will give small businesses the opportunity to afford insurance so their workers can have insurance. I believe that we need to continue to expand tax-free health savings accounts. We'll give small businesses credits that encourage them to put money in health savings accounts. We want more workers to have their own health savings accounts so they can base medical decision on advice from their doctor, not because of people at HMOs.

I believe we have an obligation to help the poor in this country. That's why I want to expand community health centers, places where the poor and the indigent can get good preventative care and good primary care. I want a community health center in every poor county in America.

I'm going to tell you what else you've got a problem with in this State, and many others do as well in other States. One reason your costs of health care are going up, and one reason it's harder to find a doc these days, like ob-gyns, is because of the frivolous lawsuits. You cannot be pro-doctor, pro-patient 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'm standing with the docs and the patients and the hospitals. I am for medical liability reform—now. In all we do to make sure health care works in America, we'll make sure the decisions are made by doctors and patients, not by bureaucrats in our Nation's Capital.

I see we've got some young workers here. I want to talk about Social Security right quick. I told you systems have changed—or systems haven't changed, and they're stuck in the past. Listen, if you're a senior, you will get your Social Security check. You should not listen to the political nonsense that happens in the course of a campaign. The Social Security trust has got enough money to fulfill its promise to those who are receiving Social Security today.

If you're a baby boomer, like me—[laughter]—leading edge of the baby boomers, I might add—[laughter]—we're going to be in

pretty good shape when it comes to Social Security. We need to worry about our children and our grandchildren when it comes to Social Security. I believe younger workers ought to be able to take some of their own money and set up a personal savings account that earns better interest than the Social Security trust, a personal savings account they can call their own and a personal savings account Government cannot take away.

Listen, in a world of change, some things don't change, the values we try to live by, courage and compassion, reverence and integrity. In times of change, we will 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 second amendment, which gives every American the individual right to bear arms. And I stand for the appointment of Federal judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law.

This election also determines how America responds to the continuing danger of terrorism. Since the terrible morning of September the 11th, 2001, we have fought the terrorists around the world, 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; we're strengthening our intelligence services; we're staying on the offensive; we're striking the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home.

We'll work to advance liberty in the broader Middle East and around the world. And by being steadfast and resolved, we'll prevail. Our strategy is succeeding. Four years ago, Afghanistan was the home base of Al Qaida; Pakistan was the transit point for terrorist groups; Saudi Arabia was fertile ground for terrorist fundraising; Libya was secretly pursuing nuclear weapons; Iraq was a gathering threat; Al Qaida was largely unchallenged as it planned attacks.

Because we led, Afghanistan is fighting terror; 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've led. Many have joined, and America and the world are safer. And this progress involved careful diplomacy, clear moral purpose, and some hard decisions.

Our hardest came on Iraq. We knew Saddam Hussein's record of aggression and support for terror. We know he had harbored Abu Nidal, the leader of a terrorist organization that carried out attacks in Europe and Asia. We knew Saddam harbored Abu Abbas, who found refuge in Baghdad after he killed American Leon Klinghoffer. We knew he paid the families of suicide bombers. We knew Saddam Hussein harbored Zarqawi, the terrorist we have seen who has beheaded some of our citizens. We knew they were there. We knew that Saddam Hussein was a sworn enemy of the United States of America. We knew that he had pursued and used weapons of mass destruction. We knew we had been at war with him once before. We knew he was a threat. And after September the 11th, this Nation must think differently about threats. We must take threats seriously before they fully materialize.

I went to the United States Congress. Members of both political parties, including my opponent, looked at the same intelligence I was looking at, remembered the same history I remembered, and voted to authorize the use of force.

Before the United States President ever commits people into harm's way, he must try all options to deal with the threat. I was hoping that diplomacy would work. I was hoping we could deal with the threat in Iraq by the use of diplomacy. That's why I went to the United Nations. At the United Nations, I made my case. They looked at the same intelligence I looked at. They remembered the history of Saddam Hussein and passed yet another resolution, 15 to nothing, that said, "Disclose, disarm, or face serious consequences." I believe when international bodies speak, they better mean what they say.

Saddam Hussein once again did not listen to the demands of the free world. He ignored this resolution, just like he ignored resolution after resolution after resolution for nearly a

decade. He just didn't believe "serious consequences." He was hoping we'd look the other way. He was hoping that we would continue with the failed policy. As a matter of fact, when we sent inspectors in—or the U.N. sent inspectors into Iraq, he systematically deceived the inspectors. That's what he did. So I had a choice to make at this time. Diplomacy has failed. Do I trust Saddam Hussein? Do I forget the lessons of September the 11th, or take action to defend this country? Given that choice, I will defend America every time.

Because we acted in our self-interest, 50 million people in Afghanistan and Iraq now live in freedom. Do you realize, a little more than 3 years ago, young girls couldn't go to school in Afghanistan because that country was run by some barbarians whose dim vision of the world is the exact opposite of ours. Their moms could be pulled out in the public square and whipped or sports stadium and killed because they wouldn't toe the line of this ideology of hate. Today, 10 million citizens, 41 percent of whom are women, have registered to vote in the upcoming October Presidential election. Amazing, isn't it?

How powerful a statistic is that? Three years to go from darkness to light because of a free society. It's in our interests that Afghanistan no longer is a safe haven for Al Qaida. It's in our interests that Afghanistan has now joined us in fighting the terrorists. It's in our interests to spread freedom, because free societies are peaceful societies.

Despite ongoing acts of violence, Iraq has a strong Prime Minister, with whom I met yesterday and will meet tomorrow and hold a press conference with him. I can't wait for the American people to hear this man. He's strong. He's tough. He was lying in a bed one night in London, and he wakes up—late at night, he was asleep—wakes up late at night; two henchmen from Saddam Hussein are by his bed with an ax trying to ax this man to death. He, fortunately, was able to get out of the situation. Today, he's the Prime Minister of Iraq. You talk about a guy who understands the stakes, somebody who understands what it means to live under the thumb of a thug. Prime Minister Allawi believes in the future of the people. They're going to have elections in January in Iraq.

When America gives its word, America will keep its word. We'll stand with the people of Afghanistan and Iraq.

Our mission in Afghanistan and Iraq is clear. We'll help the new leaders train their armies so the citizens of Afghanistan and Iraq can do the hard work of defeating the few who want to stop the ambitions of the many. We will help them get on the path of stability and democracy as quickly as possible, and then our troops will come home with the honor they have earned.

We have a great United States military, and I'm proud to be their Commander in Chief. I've had the privilege of meeting with the service men and women who defend our country and sacrifice for our security. I know their courage and their great decency. The cause of freedom is in really good hands. And I want to thank the veterans who are here today for having set such a great example for those who wear the uniform today.

Our Government must support the men and women of our uniform. We owe it to them, and we owe it to their loved ones. That's why I went to the United States Congress a year ago and asked for \$87 billion in supplemental funding that was crucial money needed for our troops who were in harm's way in both Afghanistan and Iraq. That money was for ammunition and fuel and spare parts and body armor and hazard pay and health benefits. It was vital request. We received great support, bipartisan support. Republicans and Democrats said, "This is vital funding." As a matter of fact, it was so strong that only 12 Members of the Senate voted against funding the troops——

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. ——only 12 Members, 2 of whom were my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Only 4 Members of the Senate, only 4 out of 100, voted to authorize the use of force and then voted against funding the troops. Two of those four are my opponent and his runningmate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. So they asked him—they said, "How could you have made that vote?" He said, "I actually did vote for the \$87 billion, right before I voted against it." Not a

lot of people talk like that in Latrobe, Pennsylvania. And they pressed him further. He finally just said, "The whole thing is a complicated matter." There's nothing complicated about supporting our troops in combat.

Prime Minister Allawi said yesterday that we're making progress in Iraq. Yet as we're seeing on our TV screens, it's tough; it's hard work. It's incredibly hard work, because the terrorists are desperate. They're trying to affect the elections in Iraq. They can't stand the thought of the people of that country voting to decide who their leaders are. They want to impose their dim vision on the people of that country. That's what they're trying to do, and that's why you're seeing on your TV screens awful brutality. Those terrorists will not defeat our military. They cannot defeat our military. The only thing they can do is behead people and try to shake our will.

They're trying to shake the will of the Iraqis. They're trying to convince the Iraqis freedom is not worth it. They're trying to convince the American people that we will not succeed. That's the only weapon they have. They don't understand our country. We abhor the violence. We can't stand the beheadings, but we're not going to let thugs keep us from doing our duty.

We have a strategy to help this country get to elections. We have a strategy to bring security to that country. Our military commanders have got flexibility to do their job. They're adjusting to conditions on the ground. We're helping the Iraqis rebuild their country. But one thing we will do—we will show our troops, the Iraqi people, the world, and our enemies that America will stand firm, and we will prevail.

And the way to prevail, the way toward the successful conclusion we all want, the way to secure Iraq and bring our troops home is not to wilt or waver or send mixed signals. Incredibly, this week, my opponent said he would prefer the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein to the situation in Iraq today.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. That's not the first time he's changed positions. You cannot lead the war on terror if you wilt or waver when the times are tough. You cannot expect the Iraqi people to stand up and do the hard work

for democracy if you are pessimistic about their ability to govern themselves. You can't expect the Iraqi people to have faith when you believe they were better off with Saddam Hussein in power. You can't expect these people to trust America if we think mass graves are the wave of the future of these people and the torture rooms of Saddam Hussein.

What kind of message does this send our troops, who are risking their lives and see firsthand the mission is hard, when they hear people who grow—when they wilt in the face of pressure? No, this mission is crucial to our success, and it's crucial to our future, and it's crucial to freedom. Mixed signals are the wrong signals. I will continue to lead with clarity, and when I say something, I mean it. I appreciate—

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

The President. I had a chance to visit with some of our friends and allies who are making contributions to our coalition in Afghanistan and Iraq. I had a chance to thank them on behalf of the American people for the sacrifices they're making, for the sacrifices their moms and dads of those troops—their troops, and the husbands and wives of their troops are making. I'm proud of the coalition we've put together. We've got some 40 nations involved in Afghanistan, some 30 in Iraq. And I'm going to continue to lead, to build these alliances over the next 4 years. But I will never turn over America's national security decisions to leaders of other countries.

I believe in the transformational power of liberty. You know, I sat down with Prime Minister Koizumi yesterday. I said, "I'm using your name quite a bit when I'm traveling around the country." I said, "I hope it's all right." [Laughter] "Sometimes, I'm telling the people you like Elvis too." [Laughter] I like to tell my—about my relationship with Prime Minister Koizumi because it wasn't all that long ago in the march of history that we were at war with the Japanese. They were the sworn enemy of the United States of America. As a matter of fact, I bet you a lot of your relatives fought against the Japanese. I know my dad did, and many others did as well.

And after we won in World War II, Harry S. Truman, President of the United States, wanted to work for democracy in Japan because he believed liberty could transform nations. And you can bet there were some skeptics. There were skeptics then, just like there are some skeptics today. A lot of people in America said, "Why do we want to work with an enemy? This enemy can't change its ways. We just fought them." But a lot of citizens didn't agree with that. Japan did become a democracy. And today, I sit down at the table with a former enemy, talking about achieving the peace we all want.

Liberty is powerful. One day, an American President is going to be sitting down with a duly elected official from Iraq, talking about how to keep the peace. And our children and grandchildren will be better off for it.

It's hard work to spread liberty, particularly in societies that have only known tyranny. But I believe the women of the greater Middle East desire to be free. I believe they want to be able to realize their dreams. I believe if they're the mother of a young girl, they want that young girl to be able to grow up and be anything she can be in life. I believe if given a chance, the people in that part of the world will embrace the most honorable form of government ever devised by man. I believe 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.

I said in my convention speech, we've done the hard work. We've climbed the mountain, and now we can see the valley below. And that valley is a peaceful valley. That valley is a hopeful valley. That valley is a better day for every single citizen who lives in this country. This young century will be liberty's century. By promoting freedom at home and abroad, we'll build a safer world and a more hopeful America. By reforming our systems of Government, we'll help more Americans realize their dreams. We'll pass the enduring values of our country to a new generation. We'll continue to work to spread freedom and peace.

You know, 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 isn't one of those times. This is a time that requires firm resolve, clear vision, and a 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. On September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. It's a day I will never forget. There were workers there in hardhats yelling at me at the top of their lungs, "Whatever it takes." I remember working the ropeline, doing my best to console those folks who had just been doing everything they could to find a buddy out of the rubble, save people from harm's way. A guy grabbed me by the arm, and he said, "Don't let me down." Those were impressions I'll never forget. I wake up every morning trying to figure out how best to defend our country. I will defend the security of America, whatever it takes.

When I campaigned—4 years ago, when I campaigned in your great State asking for the vote, I made a pledge to my fellow Americans. I said if you gave me a 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.

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

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:15 p.m. at Arnold Palmer Regional Airport. In his remarks, he referred to professional golfer Arnold Palmer; Senator Zell Miller of Georgia, who made the keynote address at the Republican National Convention; Lynn C. Swann, chairman, President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports; country music entertainer John Michael Montgomery; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Prime Minister Ayad Allawi of the Iraqi Interim Government; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

Statement on Senate Confirmation of Porter J. Goss as Director of Central Intelligence

September 22, 2004

I am very pleased that a strong bipartisan majority in the U.S. Senate today voted to confirm Porter Goss as the next Director of Central Intelligence. Porter Goss is a leader

with strong experience in intelligence and in the fight against terrorism. He is the right man to take on the essential mission of leading the CIA at this critical moment in our Nation's history as we face the challenges and the dangerous threats of this century. I look forward to his counsel as we implement intelligence reform, including the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission.

Joint Statement Between the United States of America and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

September 22, 2004

President George W. Bush and President Pervez Musharraf met in New York on September 22, and reaffirmed their commitment to broaden and strengthen the U.S.-Pakistan relationship in keeping with the vision agreed to in their meeting at Camp David in June last year.

The two Presidents reviewed progress in the global war on terror, and pledged to continue working together, ensuring that the appropriate resources are available. President Bush expressed appreciation for Pakistan's efforts in this area. They also welcomed the progress of the Joint Working Group on Terrorism and Law Enforcement and agreed to further strengthen bilateral cooperation in this regard.

President Musharraf highlighted the need for addressing the underlying causes that have given rise to disaffection and frustration in the Islamic world. In this connection, he recalled his concept of Enlightened Moderation which envisages cooperation of the United States and other leading world powers in finding solutions to long standing issues that affect the Muslim world.

The two leaders also noted their cooperation to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and committed to sustain full efforts towards this end.

The two leaders discussed the importance of building security and prosperity in the region. They noted the urgency of maintaining a safe environment for fair elections in Afghanistan and President Bush thanked President Musharraf for his efforts in support of out-of-country voting in Pakistan.