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country music entertainers Mark Wills and Daron Norwood; Lynn C. Swann, chairman, President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Remarks in Milwaukee, Wisconsin

November 1, 2004

The President. Thank you all. Thank you all for coming. Thank you all for coming. I want to thank all the cheese heads who are here. It's close to voting time, and I'm here to ask for your vote and your help. Get your friends and neighbors to go to the polls tomorrow. Get our fellow Republicans to go to the polls, wise independents, and discerning Democrats. And when you get them headed to the polls, remind them that if they want a safer America, a stronger America, and a better America, to put me and Dick Cheney back in office.

Perhaps the most important reason to put me back in is so that Laura will be First Lady for 4 more years. I am sorry that she's not here today.

Audience members. Aw-w-w!

The President. That's generally the reaction. [*Laughter*] She's campaigning. You've come to know her like I know her. She's warm. She's compassionate. She is a strong First Lady.

I'm proud of my runningmate, Dick Cheney. I readily concede that he does not have the waviest hair in the race. [*Laughter*] You'll be pleased I didn't pick him because of his hairdo. [*Laughter*] I picked him because of his experience, his judgment, and he's getting the job done for the American people.

I'm proud of my friend and your former Governor, Tommy Thompson. He's done a great job. He's done a fantastic job for the people. You trained him well. [*Laughter*] And I want to thank Sue Ann Thompson for her sacrifice and for letting—allowing Tommy to work so hard on behalf of the people of the United States.

I want to thank Congressman Paul Ryan and Janna; Congressman Jim Sensenbrenner and Cheryl; and Congressman Mark Green for such a great job in the United States Congress. I want to thank the statehouse people who are here. I want to thank the local government people who are here. Old Scott W. is with us. At least that's what I call him. The high sheriff is with us. Sheriff Clarke, thanks for coming.

I've been most impressed during my travels throughout Wisconsin to have met and talked with a man who will make a great United States Senator, Tim Michels. I wish Jerry Boyle all the best in his run for the Fourth Congressional District.

I want to thank Morgan Hamm for coming today. I appreciate him being here. He's been a great Olympic champ from the State of Wisconsin. I want to thank Keith Tozer and Tom Crean, great basketball coaches here in Milwaukee. I want to thank Brooks and Dunn for being here. I'm so honored they traveled. I can't thank both of the guys enough—and their band. I also want to thank our longtime friends the Oak Ridge Boys for being here. Thank you all.

I want to thank all the people who've worked so hard in this State over the last year to get ready for tomorrow. I understand people have been working hours, day after day. I want to thank you for making the phone calls and putting up the signs and preparing these fantastic bus trips we have taken all across your State. I want to thank you for what you have done. I want to thank you for what you're going to do. You're going to turn out a big vote, and we're going to carry Wisconsin.

Tomorrow the people of this good State go to the polls and vote, and I'm excited about the election day. I'm optimistic about this country and our future. I see a brighter day, a more hopeful America for every citizen.

One of my favorite sayings is by a fellow Texan named Tom Lea. Here is 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." During this campaign, my opponent spent much of the time talking about the day that is gone. I'm talking about the day that's coming.

I see a great day coming for America, a day where prosperity reaches every corner of our country, a day where every child is able to read and write and add and subtract, a day in which this world of ours becomes

more peaceful for our children and our grandchildren. Tomorrow the people of Wisconsin and America have a chance to bring that better day by voting for strong, competent, and principled leadership. I'm here asking for your vote.

The American President must lead with clarity and purpose. The role of the President is not to follow the path of the latest poll. The role of a President is to lead based on principle and conviction and conscience.

During these 4 years, I've learned that whatever your strengths are, you are going to need them; whatever your shortcomings are, the people will 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 at all times, whether you agree with me or not, you know where I stand, what I believe, and where I'm going to lead this country.

This election comes down to five clear choices for our families. The first clear choice concerns your family's budget. When I ran for President 4 years ago, I pledged to lower taxes for America's families. I kept my word. We doubled the child credit to help moms and dads. We reduced the marriage penalty. We believe the Tax Code ought to encourage, not penalize, marriage. We reduced taxes on everybody who pays taxes.

And the result of our good policies is clear to all. Our economy is growing at rates as fast as any in nearly 20 years. We've added 1.9 million jobs in the last 13 months. The farmers of Wisconsin—the farm income in Wisconsin is up. The entrepreneurial spirit is strong in America. The small-business sector is alive and well. The homeownership rate is at an alltime high, and more minority families own a home today than ever before in our Nation's history. The national unemployment rate is 5.4 percent. Let me put that in perspective for you: That's lower than the average rate of the 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s. The unemployment rate in the great State of Wisconsin is 5 percent. This economy of ours is strong, and it is getting stronger.

And I have a message for the people of Wisconsin: To keep your economy growing, we will keep your taxes low. We will make sure the small-business sector remains vibrant, and we will make sure Wisconsin farmers continue to make a good living.

My opponent has got an economic plan as well.

Audience member. Tax everything! [*Laughter*]

The President. Let me remind you of his record. He voted 98 times to increase taxes. That's in 20 years in the Senate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. That's five times a year. You might say it's a predictable pattern—[*laughter*]—a leading indicator. [*Laughter*] In this campaign, the Senator has pledged to raise taxes on the top two brackets. When you hear a politician say he's going to raise taxes, that's generally a promise they keep. [*Laughter*] He's proposing $2.2 trillion in new Federal spending. That's trillion with a "T."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. That is a lot. That's a lot even for a Senator from Massachusetts. And yet, by raising the top two brackets, he falls short of the 2.2 trillion. As a matter of fact, there is a significant tax gap. Given his record, guess who he's going to call upon to fill the tax gap? The middle class of our country. We're not going to let him tax you; we're going to carry Wisconsin tomorrow and win a victory on Tuesday.

The second clear choice in this election involves the quality of life for our Nation's families. I believe every child can learn, and I expect every school to teach. When I ran for President, I promised to challenge the soft bigotry of low expectations by reforming our schools. I kept my word. We passed education reforms to bring high standards to our classrooms. Math and reading scores are on the rise. We're closing the achievement gap by helping minority students. My vision for a new term is to build on these reforms and extend them to our high schools so that no child is left behind in America.

We will continue to improve life for our families by making health care more affordable and available. We'll expand health savings accounts. We'll allow small businesses to join together and buy insurance at the same discounts that big companies are able to do. We will help our families who need

help. But we will also do something about the frivolous lawsuits that are running up the cost of your health care and running good doctors out of practice.

We have a difference of opinion on this big issue. My opponent has voted against medical liability reform not 1 time, not 2 times, but 10 times as a Member of the United States Senate.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. And he put a personal-injury trial lawyer on the ticket.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I'm standing with Wisconsin's docs. I'm standing with Wisconsin's patients. I am standing with Wisconsin's families. I am for real medical liability reform—now. In all we do to improve health care, we will make sure the decisions are made by doctors and patients, not by officials in Washington, DC.

My opponent has got a different approach. You might remember in one of the debates when they asked him about his health care plan, he looked square in the camera and said, "The Government doesn't have anything to do with it." [*Laughter*] I could barely contain myself. [*Laughter*] The Government has got a lot to do with it. Eighty percent of the people will end up on a Government plan under his vision. Federalizing health care for America's families is the wrong prescription.

The third clear choice in this election involves your retirement. Our Nation has made a solemn commitment to America's seniors on Social Security and Medicare. When I ran for President 4 years ago, I promised to keep that commitment and improve Medicare by adding prescription drug coverage. I worked with Tommy Thompson. We got the job done, and I kept my word. Seniors are getting discounts on medicine with drug discount cards. And beginning in 2006, all seniors will be able to get prescription drug coverage under Medicare.

My opponent has a record. He voted against the Medicare bill that included prescription drug coverage for our seniors. He's also trying to scare seniors about their Social Security. But he forgets to mention that he has voted eight times to raise taxes on Social Security benefits.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He can run from his record, but he cannot hide.

I've kept the promise of Social Security for our seniors, and I will always keep the promise of Social Security for our seniors. And the Social Security trust is in pretty good shape for baby boomers like me and some others out there I see. [*Laughter*]

But we need to worry about our children and grandchildren when it comes to Social Security. The job of the President is to confront problems, not to pass them on to future generations and future Presidents. I believe younger workers ought to be allowed to take some of their payroll taxes and set it aside in a personal savings account, an account they call their own.

The fourth clear choice in this election is on the values that are crucial to keeping our families strong. I stand for marriage and family, which are the foundations of our society. I stand for a culture of life in which every person matters and every being counts. I proudly signed the ban on partial-birth abortion. I stand for the appointment of Federal judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law.

On these issues my opponent and I are miles apart. He voted against the ban on partial-birth abortion.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He voted against the Defense of Marriage Act, even though most Democrats supported it. There is a mainstream in American politics, and John Kerry sits on the far left bank. He can run from his liberal philosophy, but he cannot hide.

The final choice in this election is the most important one of all because it concerns the security of your family. All progress on every other issue depends on the safety of our citizens. The most solemn duty of the American President is to protect the American people. If this country shows uncertainty or weakness during these troubling times, this world of ours will drift toward tragedy. This is not going to happen on my watch.

Our strategy to protect America is clear. We strengthened protections for the homeland. We are reforming and strengthening

our intelligence capabilities. We are transforming the All-Volunteer Army. There will be no draft. We are relentless. We are determined. We are staying on the offensive. We are fighting the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them here at home.

We are succeeding. Afghanistan is free and an ally in the war on terror. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are making arrests and capturing terrorist leaders. Libya is dismantling its weapons programs. The army of a free Iraq is beginning to defend its freedom. Al Qaida no longer controls Afghanistan. We have shut down its camps there. We are systematically destroying the Al Qaida network.

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

The President. I am proud to be the Commander in Chief of such a great United States military. And we have a great military because of the character of the men and women who wear our Nation's uniform. I want to thank the military families who are here for your sacrifice and your courage. I want to thank the veterans who are here for having set such a great example for those who wear the uniform. And I want to assure our troops and our families that their loved ones will have all they need to complete their missions.

That's why I went to the United States Congress and asked for $87 billion of supplemental funding. This was necessary. This was important funding to support our troops. My opponent said that it would be irresponsible to vote against funding for our troops—until his poll numbers began to go down, and then he voted against funding for our troops.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. And then he entered the flip-flop hall of fame. And as he entered, he said this famous quote: "I actually did vote for the $87 billion, before I voted against it." He has has a lot of explanations about that vote since then, but I think the most revealing is this. He said, "The whole matter was a complicated matter." My fellow Americans, there is nothing complicated about supporting our troops in combat.

The problems with Senator Kerry's record on national security are deeper than election-year reversals. For 20 years, on the largest national security issues of our time, he has been consistently wrong. During the cold war, Senator Kerry voted against critical weapons systems and opposed President Ronald Reagan's policy of peace through strength. History has shown that Senator Kerry was wrong and President Ronald Reagan was right.

When former President Bush assembled an international coalition to drive Saddam Hussein from Kuwait, Senator Kerry voted against the use of force to liberate Kuwait. History has shown that Senator Kerry was wrong and former President Bush was right.

Only a year after the first bombing of the World Trade Center, the Senator proposed massive cuts in America's intelligence, so extreme that even his colleague from Massachusetts, Ted Kennedy, opposed them. History has shown that Senator Kerry was wrong—and we must be fair—Senator Kennedy was right. [*Laughter*]

We have a clear difference of opinion on how to best defend America's families. My opponent has said that America must submit to a "global test" before we commit force.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I'm not making that up. [*Laughter*] He was standing right about there when he said it. [*Laughter*] As far as I can tell, that means that America must get permission from foreign capitals. I will work on alliances. I will continue to strengthen our friendships around the world. But I will never, never turn over America's national security decisions to leaders of other countries.

Audience members. U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

The President. We have a difference of opinion about the world in which we live. The Senator said that September the 11th did not change him much at all. September the 11th changed me. It changed my outlook about how—what we needed to do to defend this country. September the 14th, 2001, I stood in the ruins of the Twin Towers. I'll never forget the sights and sounds of that day. I will never forget the workers in the hardhats yelling at me at the top of their lungs, "Whatever it takes." I remember the man who grabbed me by the arm, and he looked me in the eye, and he said, "Do not let me down." From that day forward, I've gotten up every morning thinking about how

to better protect America. I will never relent in defending this country, whatever it takes.

Over the next 4 years, we'll use every asset at our disposal to protect you. Perhaps the most powerful asset we have is freedom. I believe in the power of liberty to transform societies. I know that free nations do not breed resentments and export terror. Free nations become allies in the war on terror. Free nations will help us keep the peace we want for our children and our grandchildren.

I want you all to think, particularly the young here, to think about what has taken place in a brief period of time. In Afghanistan, young girls couldn't go to school, and their mothers were taken to the public squares and whipped and sometimes shot in a sports stadium, because of the ideology of hate of the Taliban. But because we acted to defend ourselves, because we acted to uphold a doctrine, which said, "If you harbor a terrorists, you're equally as guilty as the terrorist," millions of people voted in a Presidential election in Afghanistan. And the first voter was a 19-year old woman.

Freedom is powerful, and freedom can be threatening to the terrorists. And that's why Iraq is so dangerous. But we're headed toward free elections there. Think how far that society has come from the days of torture chambers and mass graves. See, I believe everybody deserves and wants to be free. I believe deep in everybody's soul is the desire to live in freedom. I believe moms and dads across this world want to raise their children in a free society. I believe this because I understand freedom is not America's gift to the world. I believe this because I know that freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world.

My fellow citizens, these are historic times, and a lot is at stake in this election. The future safety and prosperity of America are on the ballot. Ultimately, this election comes down to, who do you trust? Who do you trust to defend the country?

Audience members. You!

The President. Who do you trust to extend prosperity?

If you believe that taxes should stay low so families can pay their bills and small businesses can create new jobs, I ask you to come stand with me.

If you believe in high standards for our public schools, I ask you to come stand with me.

If you believe that patients and doctors should be in charge of health care, I ask you to come stand with me.

If you believe this Nation must honor the commitments of Medicare and strengthen Social Security for generations to come, I ask you to come stand with me.

If you believe this Nation should honor marriage and family and make a place for the weak and the vulnerable, I ask you to come stand with me.

If you believe America should fight the war on terror with all our might and lead with unwavering confidence in our ideals, I ask you to come stand with me.

If you are a Democrat who believes your party has turned too far to the left this year, I ask you to come stand with me.

If you are a minority citizen and you believe in free enterprise and good schools and the enduring values of family and faith, and if you're tired of your vote being taken for granted, I ask you to come stand with me.

And if you are a voter who believes that the President of the United States should say what he means and do what he says and keep his word, I ask you to come stand with me.

Four years ago, when I traveled your great State asking for the vote, I made this pledge, that if elected, I would uphold the honor and the dignity of the office. With your help, with your hard work, I will do so for 4 more years.

Thanks for coming. God bless. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:38 a.m. at the U.S. Cellular Arena. In his remarks, he referred to Sue Ann Thompson, wife of Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy G. Thompson; Milwaukee County Executive Scott K. Walker; Milwaukee County Sheriff David A. Clarke, Jr.; Morgan Hamm, 2004 Olympic gold medalist, men's gymnastics; Keith Tozer, vice president of soccer operations and head coach, Milwaukee Wave, Major Indoor Soccer League; Tom Crean, head coach, Marquette University men's basketball team; country music entertainers Brooks & Dunn and the Oak Ridge Boys; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Remarks in Des Moines, Iowa

November 1, 2004

The President. Thank you all for coming. Thank you all. Senator, what I have learned is every day is a good day to be in Iowa. And I've really enjoyed campaigning in your State in 2000, now in 2004. And I'm here one more time to ask for your vote and ask for your help. I'm asking for you to go to your friends and neighbors and tell them we have a duty in our country to vote. Go to our fellow Republicans, wise independents, and discerning Democrats. And tell them, if they want a stronger America, a safer America, and a better America, to put me and Dick Cheney back in office.

Perhaps the most important reason why people should put me back in is so that Laura is the First Lady for 4 more years. I'm sorry she's not with me right now. She's working—[*laughter*]—thankfully, for me. [*Laughter*] She gives a lot of speeches, and when she speaks, the American people see a warm, compassionate, strong First Lady.

And I'm really proud of Barbara and Jenna. I want to thank them for joining up. I can't think of a better way to complete the last day of this campaign than to be campaigning with two girls I love. And guess who surprised me today? My sister, Dorothy, is with us. Thank you, Doro. I'm a lucky man. I've got a great family, and I love my family. I'm looking forward to working with them as we complete this campaign.

I've got a great Vice President too. I'm real proud of Dick Cheney. I don't want to offend anyone here who is follically challenged, but I readily concede the Vice President doesn't have the waviest hair in the race. But I know the people of Des Moines, Iowa, will be pleased to hear that I didn't pick him because of his hairdo. I picked him because of his judgment, and I picked him because of his experience. And he's getting the job done for the American people.

I can't tell you how proud I am to be able to work with your United States Senator Chuck Grassley. He's an accomplished, effective Senator for Iowa. He is really good at what he does. I know you're going to put him back into office. He is so good at what he does, I've got a job for him on the South Lawn of the White House—got a lot of grass. [*Laughter*] And we love Barbara Grassley too. Chuck's wife is a fine, fine woman.

I want to thank my friend Congressman Jim Nussle, the chairman of the Budget Committee in the House of Representatives, for coming today.

I want to thank the State auditor here. I want to thank the majority leader. I want to thank the Urbandale mayor. I want to thank all the State and local officials. I want to thank some candidates who are here. I want to thank Stan Thompson, who's running for the United States Congress. He's the right man for the job.

I want to thank all the grassroots activists who are here. I want to thank those of you who have been putting up the signs and making the phone calls. I want to thank you for all the work you've done over the past year to get ready for tomorrow. I want to thank Dave Roederer. I want to thank my friend Becky Beach.

I want to thank the—John Stone is with us. Thank you for coming, John. I'm proud you're here. How about Cael Sanderson, gold medalist—what a great ambassador for Iowa, a great ambassador for the United States.

I want to thank you for all you've done and what you're going to do over the next 24 hours. With your help, with your hard work, by turning out this vote, there is no doubt in my mind we will carry Iowa and win a great victory on Tuesday.

Tomorrow the people of this good State and the people of America go to the polls. I'm excited about Election Day. I'm looking forward to it, and I'm also optimistic about the future of this country. I see a brighter day and a more hopeful day. One of my favorite quotes was said 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's the side to see the day that is coming, not to see the day that is gone." During the course of this campaign, my opponent has spent much of it talking about the day that is gone. I'm talking about the day that's coming.

I see a day where prosperity reaches every corner of this country. I see a day where every child is able to read and write and add and subtract. I see a day in which this world