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For American voters, what is the issue, what does it come down to?

The President. The issue is, who do you trust? This is a campaign of trust. Who do you trust to secure this country? Who do you trust to lead with firmness and steadfast resolution, protect the American people? Who do you trust to adhere to the values, the values that most people agree with? And who do you trust to keep this economy growing?

Q. And you trust the results will come out tonight?

The President. Absolutely. I trust the judgment of the American people. I love our democracy, and I have got great faith in the wisdom of the people of this country.

Big Stretch [Richard Keil, Bloomberg News].

Closure on the 2004 Election

Q. Does it feel to you like we'll know the results tonight? Or will it be a nail-biter like it was 4 years ago?

The President. Well, of course, these are the pundits—there are pundits and prognosticators like you all. You're doing a fabulous job of speculating what may happen. My hope, of course, is that this election ends tonight. I think it's very important for it to end tonight. The world watches our great democracy function. There would be nothing better for our system for the election to be conclusively over tonight so that—I think it's going to be—so I can go on and lead this country and bring people together, set an agenda, which will be to make sure America is secure, expand our prosperity, and move forward and bring Republicans and Democrats together.

Listen, we're off. I've enjoyed it. Thank you for your coverage.

Senator John Kerry

Q. Any words for Senator Kerry this morning?

The President. I wish him all the best. You know, he and I are in the exact same position. We've given it our all, and I'm—I'm sure he is happy, like I am, that the campaign has come to a conclusion. All I can tell you is I know that I've put my full amount of energy in this campaign, and I've enjoyed it. And I am enthused, and I have been uplifted by the spirit of the—of our supporters and by the prayers of our supporters.

Anyway, thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:42 a.m. at the Crawford Fire Station. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to Campaign Volunteers and an Exchange With Reporters in Columbus, Ohio

November 2, 2004

The President. Thank you all for doing this. Listen, we've come to thank our volunteers here in Ohio. They represent thousands of people all across the country who are making the calls and turning out the vote. I have been uplifted by the fact that thousands of people are working on my behalf and the fact that thousands pray for me and Laura and our country.

One of the best ways to help send a signal about how appreciative I am is to come and thank people in person. Obviously, Ohio is an important State. It's a State that we intend to carry. I know we've got a lot of work to do. There's a lot of people, as you can tell, in this building, working hard in Columbus, and they're working hard all across the State of Ohio. So this is an exciting time. The polls will be closing in 5 or 6 hours—however long it is. [*Laughter*] And I'm confident we'll carry Ohio, and I'm confident we'll carry the Nation. And I look forward to leading this Nation for 4 more years. I'm running because I've got more to do, more to—more work to be done to keep this country secure, more work to be done to make sure prosperity reaches every corner of the land.

I want to thank all our supporters here in Ohio for their hard work.

Legal Issues

Q. Are you getting updates on legal wrangling out there on the plain?

The President. No, I really haven't. Call my lawyer. [*Laughter*]

Turnout for the 2004 Election

Q. Sir, does a big turnout help both sides, and should it?

The President. Listen, I am for a turnout as big as possible. I believe everybody should vote. We have a duty in this country to vote. I hope every citizen in Ohio and elsewhere does their duty. And I think it's—and I think we'll have a good turnout, and I will be grateful if there's a big turnout. I think it's good for our system.

Election Outcome

Q. Is it going to be a divided country, no matter what happens, if it's a close election?

The President. Oh, you know, I was asked that question by another one of the pundits earlier, trying to guess about the outcome of the election. You need to talk to the experts. I can just tell you what I've seen. I've seen enthusiasm, a willingness for people to put in extra hours of work. And we'll find out how it goes tonight. This election is in the best of hands: It's in the hands of the voters of Ohio and voters all around the country.

Q. Sir, you may think you're no pundit, but you've clearly paid pretty close attention. Give us a sense of how involved you are in tracking the numbers and voter turnout and——

The President. Well, David [David Gregory, NBC News], since I last talked to you, which was outside the voting booth in Crawford—[*laughter*]—which was a couple of hours ago, I've had a couple of cups of coffee. I spent some quality time with my wife. I am going to run this race out to its fullest. I will be able to—both of us will be able to say that we campaigned as hard as we possibly could. I have made the differences as clear as possible about why I think I am the best leader for the country for the next 4 years. You know, we'll find out tonight what the American people think, and I'm looking forward to it.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:42 a.m. at the Ohio Bush-Cheney '04 campaign headquarters. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks in a Victory Celebration

November 3, 2004

Thank you all. Thank you all for coming. We had a long night and a great night. The voters turned out in record numbers and delivered an historic victory.

Earlier today, Senator Kerry called with his congratulations. We had a really good phone call. He was very gracious. Senator Kerry waged a spirited campaign, and he and his supporters can be proud of their efforts. Laura and I wish Senator Kerry and Teresa and their whole family all our best wishes.

America has spoken, and I'm humbled by the trust and the confidence of my fellow citizens. With that trust comes a duty to serve all Americans, and I will do my best to fulfill that duty every day as your President.

There are many people to thank, and my family comes first. Laura is the love of my life. [*Applause*] I'm glad you love her too. [*Laughter*] I want to thank our daughters, who joined their dad for his last campaign. I appreciate the hard work of my sister and my brothers. I especially want to thank my parents for their loving support.

I'm grateful to the Vice President and Lynne and their daughters, who have worked so hard and been such a vital part of our team. The Vice President serves America with wisdom and honor, and I'm proud to serve beside him.

I want to thank my superb campaign team. I want to thank you all for your hard work. I was impressed every day by how hard and how skillful our team was. I want to thank Marc, Chairman Marc Racicot, and the campaign manager, Ken Mehlman, and the architect, Karl Rove. I want to thank Ed Gillespie for leading our party so well.

I want to thank the thousands of our supporters across our country. I want to thank you for your hugs on the ropelines. I want to thank you for your prayers on the ropelines. I want to thank you for your kind words on the ropelines. I want to thank you for everything you did to make the calls and to put up the signs, to talk to your neighbors, and to get out the vote. And because you did the incredible work, we are celebrating today.