

to transform societies. Let me tell you what I mean by that. Perhaps an example is the best way to make my point. Laura and I have a great friend in Prime Minister Koizumi of Japan. We like him. He's a fun guy to be around. He's a good friend. I saw him in New York at the United Nations in early September. I said, "You know, I'm talking about you when I get out there on the campaign trail. I hope you don't mind." He said, "Fine, go ahead and talk about me." I didn't ask him permission to tell you what I'm about to tell you, and that is, Elvis is his favorite singer—truthfully—[laughter]—and "High Noon" is his favorite movie. [Laughter]

Anyway, so, you know, it doesn't sound that—must not sound—to some it probably doesn't sound that profound that the Prime Minister of Japan and I are friends. But remember this part of history: 60 years ago, they were the sworn enemy of the United States of America. We were at war with the Japanese. And a lot of relatives of yours, I'm confident, fought in that war. My dad did, and other dads and granddads did as well. And it was a tough war, and we lost a lot of folks.

Yet, after we won the war, President Harry S. Truman believed in the power of liberty to transform an enemy into an ally. That's what he believed. So did a lot of other Americans. A lot of other Americans didn't agree with him, though. Why help the enemy? And the enemy couldn't become a democracy. You know, there was a lot of excuses and a lot of pessimism about the helping the Japanese. But fortunately, they stuck to it. Japan became a democracy. And today I sit down at the table with Prime Minister Koizumi, talking about how to keep the peace we all want, talking about keeping the peace.

Someday, an American President will be sitting down with the duly elected leader from Iraq, talking about the peace in the greater Middle East, and our children and our grandchildren will be better off for it.

I believe people in the Middle East want to live in freedom. That's what I believe. The people of Afghanistan showed what freedom can mean. Do you realize women stood in line for hours waiting to vote, after having lived in a society where they had no rights. And they stood in line to vote, even though

the Taliban were threatening them with death and destruction. People want to be free. I believe women in the greater Middle East want to live in a free society. I believe moms and dads want to raise their children in a free and peaceful world. I believe all 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.

It's the last time I'm going to be in Eau Claire before the election, but I do want to thank you for coming. And when I campaigned in your State in 2000, 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, we will carry Wisconsin, and I will do so for 4 more years.

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

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:49 p.m. at J&D Manufacturing. In his remarks, he referred to Don and Diana Redetzke, founders, J&D Manufacturing; Scott K. Walker, Milwaukee County executive; John Gard, speaker, Wisconsin State Assembly; Dale Schultz, candidate for Congress in Wisconsin's Third Congressional District; Tim Michels, senatorial candidate in Wisconsin, and his wife, Barbara; Wayne LaPierre, executive vice president, and Chris W. Cox, Institute for Legislative Action executive director, National Rifle Association; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan.

## Statement on Signing the Belarus Democracy Act of 2004

October 20, 2004

The Belarus Democracy Act of 2004, which I signed into law earlier today, will help the cause of freedom in Belarus. This bipartisan legislation demonstrates America's deep concern over events in Belarus and a commitment to sustain those Belarusians who must labor in the shadows to return freedom to their country.

At a time when freedom is advancing around the world, Aleksandr Lukashenka and his Government are turning Belarus into a regime of repression in the heart of Europe, its Government isolated from its neighbors

and its people isolated from each other. We will work with our allies and partners to assist those seeking to return Belarus to its rightful place among the Euro-Atlantic community of democracies. There is no place in a Europe whole and free for a regime of this kind.

On October 17, Mr. Lukashenka claimed victory for referendum results that swept away constitutional limits on his term in office. The referendum campaign and concurrent Parliamentary elections were conducted in a climate of abuse and fear. OSCE and other observers have determined that this victory was achieved by fraudulent means.

These actions are the latest in a series of measures designed to stifle independent voices within Belarus. Since 2001, Belarusian authorities have systematically repressed independent media, trade unions, civic organizations, and religious congregations. The Lukashenka regime has repeatedly responded to the peaceful expression of opposition with beatings, arrests and, in a number of cases, the disappearance of opposition leaders.

The Belarus Democracy Act will help us support those within Belarus who are working toward democracy. We welcome this legislation as a means to bolster friends of freedom and to nurture the growth of democratic values, habits, and institutions within Belarus. The fate of Belarus will rest not with a dictator, but with the students, trade unionists, civic and religious leaders, journalists, and all citizens of Belarus claiming freedom for their nation.

NOTE: H.R. 854, approved October 20, was assigned Public Law No. 108-347.

**Proclamation 7835—National Disability Employment Awareness Month, 2004**

*October 20, 2004*

*By the President of the United States of America*

**A Proclamation**

Americans with disabilities are active and contributing members of our society, and they must have the opportunity to develop the skills they need to compete and obtain

jobs in the 21st century workforce. By reducing physical barriers and false perceptions, our country meets our commitment to millions of Americans with disabilities, and benefits from their talents, creativity, and hard work.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) has brought about important progress in our Nation. Under my Administration's New Freedom Initiative, we continue to work to ensure that people with disabilities can participate fully in the workplace and all aspects of community life. Through funding for new technologies and innovative resources, we are changing old ways of thinking and fulfilling the Federal Government's commitment to opportunity for every citizen.

The New Freedom Initiative has helped enable individuals with disabilities to access assistive technologies. My Administration has invested in research and development for new technology. We have expanded the Department of Defense's Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program, which provides Federal employees with disabilities greater access to electronic and information technology. The Department of Labor launched *DisabilityInfo.gov* in 2002, an online resource that streamlines access to information about Federally sponsored employment, job accommodations, transportation, State and regional assistance programs, technology, and other programs relevant to the daily lives of individuals with disabilities.

We must foster a better understanding of ADA requirements and increase dialogue and cooperation between the business and disability communities. Through the New Freedom Small Business Initiative, the Department of Labor and the Small Business Administration are educating small business owners about the benefits of hiring people with disabilities and helping adult workers with disabilities acquire the skills and resources needed to become small business owners. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is releasing user-friendly information on how the ADA applies to particular disabilities in the workplace and providing free ADA workshops offering employment-related services and information sessions for small businesses. My Administration