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# Hilltopics: Volume 1, Issue 5

Hilltopics Staff

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# HILLTOPICS

SPECIAL EXPANDED ELECTION EDITION

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volume one, issue five

week of november 01, 2004

## SMU Democrats urge vote for Kerry

*submitted by the SMU College Democrats*

Before I am to continue any further, I would like to provide a quote:

"Government is not reason, it is not eloquence, it is force; like fire, a troublesome servant and a fearful master. Never for a moment should it be left to irresponsible action."

We have an obligation to our military to ensure that every conflict we enter is not only legitimate, but has both the financial and logistical backing that will provide for a swift victory and a smooth transition towards peace. Our own troops, coupled with the Iraqi civilians, are continuing to die on a daily basis that is worsening by the minute. The former head of the Coalition Provisional Authority, Paul Bremer, stated that not having a sufficient amount of troops on the ground to stop the widespread looting and violence has "established an atmosphere of lawlessness." In the process of maintaining peace in the region, especially in the violent hotspots of Najaf, Basra, Tikrit, and Baghdad, one thousand of our own troops have lost their lives, coupled with over 14,000 civilians.

However, regardless of the troubles that currently plague Iraq, we must not forget what originally brought us there. The American people were told of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons programs that did not exist. The Bush Administration told of a connection between Saddam Hussein, September 11, and Osama bin Laden. None of the aforementioned claims are true, as indicated by the findings of the 9/11 Commission Report. Charles Duelfer, the U.S weapons inspector for Iraq, indicated in his report that Hussein's

WMD programs had been virtually destroyed since 1991, and that his ability to restart such

see **KERRY** on page 6

## Republicans praise George W. Bush

*submitted by the SMU College Republicans*

You should vote for George W. Bush because he is a president who understands the price of freedom. He understands that leaders throughout history often have had to choose between tyranny and freedom. The choice they make can reverberate for generations to come. This is a president who, like Winston Churchill, does not flinch when the going gets tough.

Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, President Bush has taken the fight to the terrorists. The President put the world on notice that he will hold any person or regime harboring or supporting terrorists as guilty as the terrorists themselves. True character is revealed in a time of crisis. President Bush has demonstrated that he's a man of principle, and when he decides to go after the terrorists, he'll do everything in his power to protect Americans. He has made it clear that America will not wait for new threats to grow and fester. 9/11 taught that we cannot forget that terrorists remain determined to kill as many Americans as possible, both abroad and here at home, and would like nothing more than to use the world's most deadly weapons against us. With such an enemy, no negotiated peace is possible; no policy of containment or deterrence will prove effective. Only a President with great character, resolve and commitment can protect America. President Bush is a person who can make a decision and does not suffer from "paralysis analysis."

You should vote for George W. Bush because he is a president who understands that tax cuts are not just something that all taxpayers deserve, but also the best way to curb government spending. It is the best kind of tax reform. If the money never reaches the

see **BUSH** on page 6



**INSIDE**  
this issue

**Congress:** Lauren Leahy weighs in on the local significance of the Frost-Sessions congressional race, page 5.

**Elections:** Why should MTV tell young people how (or even if) they should vote? Laura Healy shares her thoughts, page 2.

**On the web:** Go to [www.smu.edu/honors/hilltopics](http://www.smu.edu/honors/hilltopics) to read all of the stories in this issue and more. You can also post your thoughts on our readers' message board.

## Incumbent vs. Incumbent congressional race has Dallas-area significance

by Lauren Leahy

The election is tomorrow, and on the political playground of the Park Cities resounds a hearty chant – “fight, fight.” All of a sudden, the wealthiest of the wealthy are huddled up like kids at recess, making fun of the other team. The neighborhood arm-wrestling is not about Bush and Kerry, as one may expect, but over Martin Frost and Pete Sessions, the two contenders for Congress in Texas district 32. Once-quiet residential streets have turned into advertising highways, with massive political billboards staring one another down from front yards. But in this highly competitive race, yard art is not the only thing facing off.

Friends and neighbors are facing off too; the race is impacting personal relationships all across the Park Cities, “pitting neighbor against neighbor” says Terri Brittingham, a Highland Park resident on Abbott Dr.

It’s almost as if Highland Park-ers have traded in their Louis Vuitton handbags and Cadillac Escalades for bandanas and tricked-out Cutlass Supremes. The Park Cities ghetto is filled with the political graffiti of cheap stake signs, marking the territory of this area’s Bloods and Crypts.

Of course, this is extreme, but for the Park Cities, political crossfire like this is hard to come by. For years, the Park Cities – the home of Dick Cheney and many other important Republican figures – was dubbed a safe-haven for conservative candidates. In 2003, Will Kruger of *The Daily Texan* called the Park Cities area, “a wealthy, largely Republican Dallas suburb.”

This time around, however, they’re in one of the most expensive and highly contested challenges in the nation according to CNN. The battle rages across the district with the vigor of an old-school brawl, with both contenders suspected to

have a good shot at a win. According to a recent *Dallas Morning News* poll, it is close to a “statistical dead heat,” meaning that Frost, although behind, is almost within the margin of error. The ghetto-fied weapons of the Park Cities neighborhood? Posting campaign signs, attending local debates, and joining district-wide walks for the candidates.

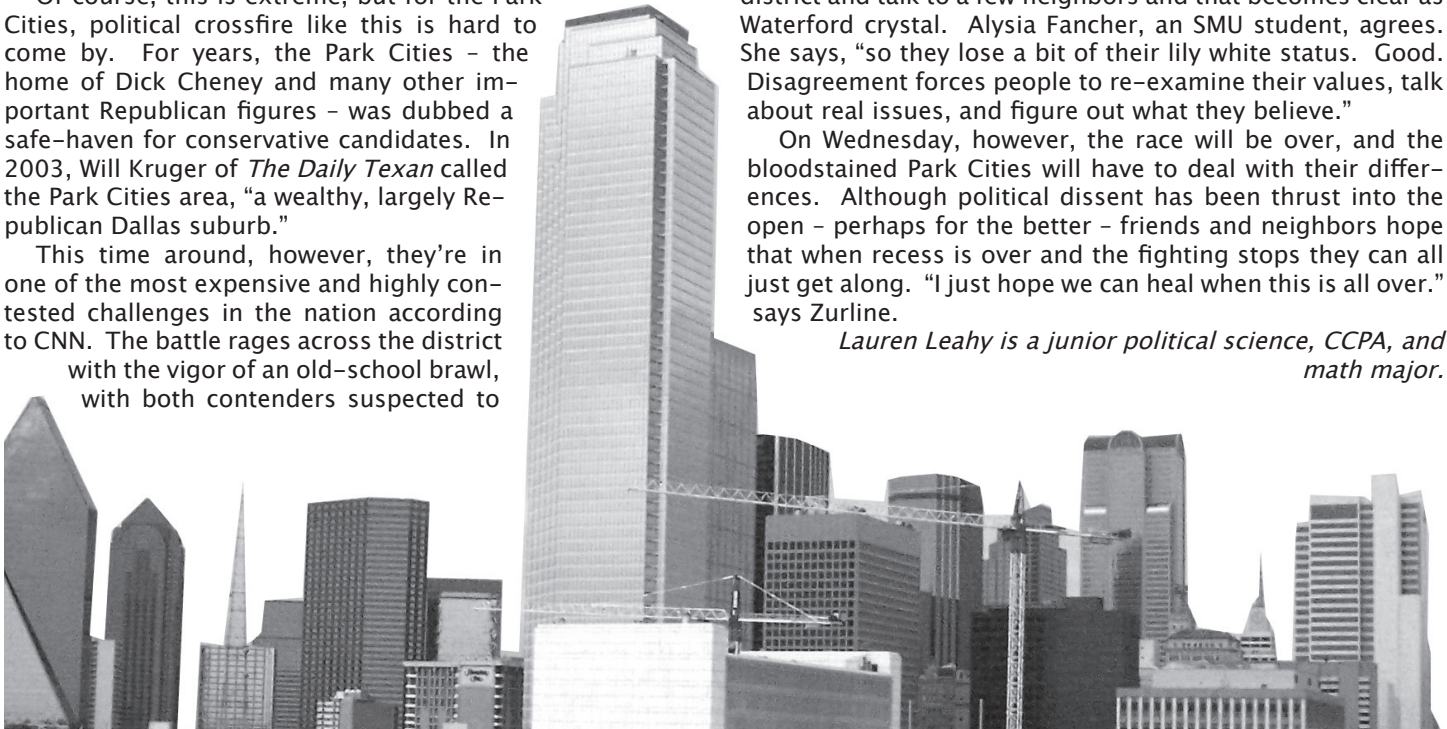
“People are getting fired up for election day, and I have a feeling this won’t be a pretty one,” says Barbara Zurline, a Highland Park resident.

She may be right. Both candidates are name-calling and hair pulling, and the negativity has spread to residents in the district. According to Ceesun Sumurdy, an intern for the Pete Sessions campaign and a Park Cities resident, “This has turned into a dirty race, and accusations are flying right and left,” she says. Brittingham agrees. “It’s getting nasty. People just aren’t getting along like they used to,” she says.

Despite my ham-handed gang analogy, the mudslinging really does cut into a deeper question – how can high society be open about politics without losing their demure, Southern charm? It seems to me that they can’t. Just look around the district and talk to a few neighbors and that becomes clear as Waterford crystal. Alysia Fancher, an SMU student, agrees. She says, “so they lose a bit of their lily white status. Good. Disagreement forces people to re-examine their values, talk about real issues, and figure out what they believe.”

On Wednesday, however, the race will be over, and the bloodstained Park Cities will have to deal with their differences. Although political dissent has been thrust into the open – perhaps for the better – friends and neighbors hope that when recess is over and the fighting stops they can all just get along. “I just hope we can heal when this is all over.” says Zurline.

*Lauren Leahy is a junior political science, CCPA, and math major.*



**Wish things were different?**

You can do something about it.

**Tomorrow's election day.  
Vote.**

**Want things to stay the same?**

Make it happen.

**Tomorrow's election day.  
Vote.**

## MTV's 'Choose or Lose' campaign is true loser in effort to bring out youth vote

by Laura Healy

So, you are watching a mind-boggling episode of "Room Raiders" on MTV when suddenly your screen turns into static. Suddenly you see Xzibit with an American flag hanging behind him, telling you to vote. 30 seconds later the commercial is over, and your beloved "Room Raiders" returns.

MTV creates shows and commercials that are geared towards its political campaign, "Choose or Lose." This campaign pushes the young audience to get involved in the election campaign, focus on the issues, and vote.

However, the question remains, what is MTV doing and why? Both political parties would agree with MTV that it is important for young people to vote. However, I believe that MTV is not informing their audience well enough to make an educated decision on whom to vote for. In addition, it seems obvious that MTV supports John Kerry. If MTV is going to create such a huge campaign, they should objectively show both sides and stop placing propaganda-like messages in their shows and ads.

Upon entering MTV.com, an entire webpage of political sites is available. However, most of these political websites are just colorful graphics with a few words or phrases written next to a picture of George Bush or John Kerry. MTV.com tries to be an easy medium for young people to learn about the issues for this year's elections, but instead, we are left with nothing but advertisements and empty links. Just because MTV tries to cater to young people, does not mean that they should skimp on actual political information.

One of the links is the "PRElection" voting results, where young people can place their vote before the actual election. The results were a landslide for John Kerry. However, less than a 100,000 people voted, as opposed to the 20 million that MTV wants to vote in the actual elections. If young impressionable minds see these results, perhaps they will decide to follow and vote for Kerry as well. Not that you should not vote for who you want, but do not let an online poll and a fancy website shape your decision.

In addition, the purpose of MTV's television programs is entertainment. However, if MTV is going to create such a huge political campaign, they need to remove some of the entertaining parts, and replace those with actual informa-

tion, not just P. Diddy screaming, "Vote or Die." Oh, ok... let me just vote because otherwise I might choke on my unanswered ballot.

One of the many "Choose or Lose" commercials featured on MTV displays the slogan, "Vote for SUVs, Vote for Something." This commercial is meant to persuade young people to vote for what they feel is important. Ok, so let me vote for my awesome car. But then whom should I vote for president?

Go on CNN.com instead and read what informed political specialists are saying about the issues. Why not even listen to what the actual candidates have to say. Everywhere you look on MTV, you see and hear celebrities support the "Choose or Lose" campaign. That's great, I'm glad they've made their decision. But you do not have to think the same thing as Paris Hilton and her dog; remember, celebrity does not always equal brains.

MTV's "Choose or Lose" is becoming increasingly more influential and apparent to other media and political groups as well as college students. Hopefully young people will decide who to vote for based on their individual beliefs and what the presidential candidates stand for, not just who the trendy candidate is. Christina Aguilera may know a lot about sex, but should we form our political opinions based on what she says?

*Laura Healy is a sophomore French and history major.*

### To the editors:

The Oct. 25 *Hilltopics* quoted a current political slogan: "Bush-Cheney: Malice in Blunderland." The phrase (without politicians' names attached), in fact, has an SMU pedigree. In 1973, Dr. Thomas L. Martin, then dean of what is now the SMU Engineering School, published *Malice in Blunderland*, a satirical look at waste, errors, chicanery and just plain disorganization in organizations. With his tongue-in-cheek explanations of such previously unknown sciences as "Hierarchiology" and "Kludgemanship," Dr. Martin showed that the phrase "Malice in Blunderland" can be descriptive not only of a governing administration but of businesses and academic institutions as well.

—Bruce Tindall  
Lecturer in English



## SMU Homecoming

Tuesday November 2nd  
**1st Annual Homecoming College Bowl**  
HT Ballroom 5:30 pm

Wednesday November 3rd  
**3rd Annual Live from the Hilltop**  
featuring Ingram Hill  
Flagpole 6-8 pm

Saturday November 6th  
**5k run**  
Laura Lee Blanton Building 8:30-9:30 am  
**Homecoming Parade**  
Hillcrest Ave. and Bishop Blvd. 11:30  
**SMU Mustangs vs. Tulsa Golden Hurricanes**  
2:00 pm

**Candidate Voting:**  
Begins: November 2nd at 11:00 pm  
Ends: November 4th at 11:00 pm  
[www.smu.edu/elections](http://www.smu.edu/elections)



## Americans take for granted the beauty of our political and electoral process

by Dawn Jenkins

In these frenzied final days of campaigning amidst the flurry of yard signs, bumper stickers, and t-shirts that blanket University Park, we are confronted with several questions. Will I vote in this presidential election? Whom will I vote for? And most importantly, who will win? Forget all those questions, and take a moment to celebrate the awesomeness of our great nation.

Many lament the tactics of this year's presidential election: the smear campaigns, the name-calling, those pesky 527 groups, the enormous and unequaled campaign spending, and the sheer spectacle of the candidates fighting it out tooth and nail. Some complain that these occurrences taint the purity of the democratic election process as they are degrading, shameful, and outrageous. Well, yes, they are, but I like it that way. Sure, I've been nauseated a few times by the fast-food diet of election-year propaganda—it's stale, pre-packaged, and some of the ingredients are appalling. Digesting basic media coverage can leave you with a bad case of heartburn and without the nutrition that our hungry minds crave.

But for those who choose to balance their diet with a few green vegetables, the truth is out there. In short, nothing is stopping you from seeking out the cold, hard facts and drawing your own conclusions. On the other hand, no one has the right to tell you what you can and can't say. There is no law against being stupid; in fact, your right to say stu-

pid things is protected by the Constitution. And that is why our nation is so great: it's messy, it's loud, it's unapologetic, and it's rebellious. Most importantly, it's the result of our First Amendment freedoms. Removing the offensive and the absurd in our election process would be as ridiculous as outlawing fast food.

You want to clean up politics? I don't. The more voices that are silenced and the more sterile our society becomes, the greater the likelihood is that we will be left with a single voice that may be polite—perhaps even politically correct—but that voice will also be dangerously vague and potentially corrupt. In a storm of accusations and a whole ice-cream parlor full of journalistic "scoops," secrets have a way of coming to the surface. So don't worry about the lies that are being propagated. If a majority of American citizens is truly stupid enough to buy all of that junk, then we'll get what we deserve. Don't worry about the nonsensical ranting of a few political extremists yelling into the microphone because the moderate, levelheaded majority balances out the "extreme values" in our political system. Hopefully, just as competing forces result in equilibrium for the competitive marketplace, the pluralism of interests in American society will stabilize at a sort of political equilibrium. Regardless of who wins the election on Nov. 2, we can be proud of how he was awarded his office, and if we're not, then we have only ourselves to blame.

### THE GARTNER HONORS LECTURE SERIES PRESENTS

# DR. MICHAEL ADLER

ANTHROPOLOGY DEPARTMENT, SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

## "ETHNIC CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE AMERICAN SOUTHWEST"

### LECTURE

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 3

6:30 PM

HUGHES-TRIGG FORUM

### DISCUSSION WITH DR. ADLER

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4

5:00 PM

VIRGINIA-SNIDER 1ST FLOOR LOUNGE

*LECTURE IS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.*

Questions? Contact Darci Spencer at [dspencer@smu.edu](mailto:dspencer@smu.edu) or call the University Honors Program Office at 214-768-2813.

## Redskins and Packers predict vote

*Could an NFL game really predict the outcome of the election?*

*by Douglas Hill*

Voter turn-out is expected to be high on Tuesday—but still below 60% of eligible voters. And that's modern representative democracy in action.

Political strategists have spent the better part of, oh, forever trying to determine who will vote and how to make those voters vote for their particular candidate. Meanwhile, the media politiholics have undertaken the task of determining just which party has done a better job of bringing out those people likely to vote in their favor. If they do a good job predicting just who will vote for whom, their news broadcasts can explain who would win the election if it were held today, despite the fact that there is only one day every four years where that information is important.

Wouldn't life be simpler if there were a way we could know a few days early just who was going to win the election? Dan Rather wouldn't have to stay on the air for 12 straight hours on election night; over-worked Florida election officials wouldn't have to worry about pregnant and dimpled chads; the thousands of lawyers hired by both parties would be unemployed. In short, the world would be a better place.

Enter the National Football League.

The Washington Redskins moved from Boston to the nation's capital in the late 1930s, and since then they have had 16 home games the weekend before a Presidential election. Every time they've won on Sunday, the incumbent party has won on Tuesday. Every time they've lost, the incumbent party has lost. Political observers agree that the curious phenomenon is unmatched in terms of length of accuracy.

This Sunday's Redskins-Packers game was number 17, and in case you haven't heard, John Kerry (who, during a campaign stop in Wisconsin called Lambeau Field—arguably the most famous piece of NFL legend—"Lambert Field") won by a score of 28-14.

Senator Kerry was quick to capitalize on the possible publicity the game offers him. "I think it's a good tradition to follow," he said. "The Packers have done their part; this Tuesday I'll do mine."

The Bush campaign doesn't seem to be putting much stock into the game. Spokesman Scott Stanzel poked fun at the Democratic challenger, saying that "after today's victory, we're confident Packer fans across Wisconsin will be excited to go out and vote for the candidate who understands the 'frozen tundra of Lambeau' is not a dessert item in an expensive French restaurant."

*Douglas Hill is a sophomore international studies and philosophy major.*

## Last minute election news...

### **Students rejected by electoral college**

(Washington DC) Thousands of college-bound students were disappointed this week when the Electoral College mailed rejection letters to every individual that has sent an application for admission to the U.S. capitol. With an acceptance rate of 0%, the Electoral College will once again retain its spot as the institution with the most arduous acceptance standards. "Our program is, unfortunately, only designed to accept one applicant every four years," laments an official on the admissions staff at E.C. "We don't even publish an application, but students flood our mailboxes with personal statements and biographical information."

### **Fourth Presidential debate features 'rock, paper, scissors'**

(Dallas) Rumors that a fourth presidential debate occurred between George W. Bush and John Kerry have been confirmed by sources from a small, weekly, Dallas opinion publication. Though the debate was not televised, a bystander recorded the event on his Nokia video-phone and uploaded the file to the internet. In it, the winner is determined by a best-of-three "rock, paper, scissors" contest, rather than by fielding questions and providing banal responses. The first round went to Kerry when Bush became confused and used three fingers to make the "scissors" symbol, resulting in a disqualification. The President recovered, though, and won the second round, despite Kerry's attempt to flip-flop his scissors into a rock. The winner is unknown, as the filming was interrupted by a text message, but representatives from both campaigns claim that their candidate won.

### **Officials consider skipping count, moving directly to recount**

(Tallahassee) Election officials in many Florida precincts are requesting permission to skip the initial counting of votes and to move straight to the recount they feel is inevitable. Officials in Palm Beach, Dade, and Broward Counties have submitted requests to state Attorney General Charlie Crist's office. "Honestly, what's the point?" one Miami-area worker complained, "We do this once, then we'll have to do it all over again for a few weeks. If we just wait to do the initial counting until, say, December, everyone will be ready for a winner and won't care how many times we count the ballots." As of press time, officials in Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Hawaii had all made similar requests. "I don't see what the big deal is," a confused United States Supreme Court Chief Justice William Rehnquist said, "I got to vote *twice* in 2000, but only the second time really mattered. How much of a hassle can a recount be? There are only nine ballots, right?"

**Do you have an opinion about...** politics, music, class, television, football, shopping, intramurals, fraternities, movies, tests, the Mavs, sex, restaurants, religion, sororities, driving, study abroad, Umphrey Lee, fashion, news, the war, parking, technology, magazines, bars, baseball, the weather, professors, the Mustang Band, dating, books, nightclubs, Texas, the Daily Campus, pets, club sports, or anything else **?**

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## Campus political groups urge voter support for their Presidential candidates

**KERRY from page 1**

programs have not been met with any substantial success.

This president, rather than hold himself accountable for his claims and complete mismanagement of the war, is more interested in spinning the findings to conceal one of his most evident shortcomings.

During and after 2001, the economy began to slow down. However, the solutions that President Bush offered were completely unacceptable and failed to provide any sense of relief for the people who needed it most. After implementing his tax-cut package of 2003, President Bush assured the American people that they would soon observe the creation of 5.5 million new jobs by the end of this term.

The reality? This President will be the first in 72 years, since Herbert Hoover, to lose jobs during his term. Even during the troubling economic times of the 70s, there was job growth. President Bush, along with a few other supply-side and "trickle-down" economics advocates, believed that providing tax relief to those who do not need it will spur the economy. Yet every month that passes by, job creation numbers fall short in staggering quantities of the optimal number that economists would like to see to actualize recovery.

To make matters worse, President Bush is doing nothing to make healthcare less burdensome for the American people. Instead of allowing Medicare to bulk purchase drugs and negotiate lower prices with private drug companies, President Bush prevented that in the Medicare Prescription Drug Plan in 2003. Furthermore, the fact that he has barred drug importation from Canada has made lowering healthcare costs a more distant prospect, leaving millions of Americans behind in a sea of declining incomes and rising costs.

Additionally, our ballooning deficits and quickly growing national debt pose many great dangers for the economic stability of this country, one in part by the prospect of rising interest rates. President Bush has unquestionably been one of the most fiscally irresponsible Presidents of our time, turning a projected ten-year, \$5.7 trillion dollar surplus in 2001 into a massive, ten-year projected \$5.2 trillion dollar deficit, the largest turn around in the history of the United States.

John Kerry will help restore fiscal sanity to the United States by reverting back to the discretionary spending habits that we employed during the Clinton administration, as well as rolling back the tax-cuts for only the wealthiest Americans and by reinstating PAYGO: a policy that demands of all representatives and Senators that they account for where they will find the money to finance their proposals.

John Kerry will leave the choice of abortion between a woman's physician and her god, will work to protect our constitutional rights and ability to self-govern, and will work to reestablish credibility in the national community by strengthening Homeland Security and by making sure that we go to war not because we want to, but because we have to.

America's finest days are ahead of her; the future belongs to hope, not fear. On November 2nd, let us re-defeat Bush and provide an environment of security and harmony for not just America, but for the rest of the world to admire.

**BUSH from page 1**

table, Congress can't gobble it up. At a critical moment in the Nation's economic history, while a recession was taking hold, America was attacked, and corporate fraud was exposed, the President responded to these challenges by decisively strengthening the economy and creating jobs. The President's leadership resulted in Congress returning taxpayer money to the families, entrepreneurs, innovators, and investors who earned it.

In his second term, President Bush will focus on building a more prosperous, competitive economy that will continue to be a strong engine for jobs and prosperity for years to come. The essential elements of his plan include: taking the next bold steps in reforming education, building a skilled and effective workforce, encouraging a fair and simpler tax system, promoting research and development in both the public and private sectors, opening markets for American goods around the globe, meeting our energy needs and lessening our energy dependence, reducing the regulatory burden, and reforming Government to be smaller and more efficient, responsive, and effective. President Bush is committed to making sure America has the best prepared, best educated, and highest skilled workforce in the world.

On Election Day, SMU College Republicans asks you to remember that America is free because of the men and women who fight to safeguard our liberty. In this time when determination and focus are needed to protect America's security and the natural rights of people around the world, we have a president who will stand for what he believes and for what is best for our nation. We are fighting for future peace for the descendents of America, just as our grandparents fought for us in WWII.

The proper attitude about the war on terror was expressed by John Stuart Mill: "War is an ugly thing but not the ugliest of things; the decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feelings which thinks that nothing is worth war is much worse. A man who has nothing for which he is willing to fight, nothing which is more important than his own personal safety, is a miserable creature and has no chance of being made free unless made and kept so by the exertions of better men than himself."

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