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PUBLIC PAPERS OF THE PRESIDENTS OF THE UNITED STATES

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Foreword

This volume contains my speeches, messages, major statements, and press conferences from the first 6 months of 2001. This was a period of significant and shared accomplishment on a range of important issues.

My Administration set out to provide a new tone of civility and cooperation. I worked closely with congressional leaders of both parties to pass needed reforms.

Together, we defined an entirely new role for the Federal Government in American education. In the past, Federal authorities often imposed extensive mandates on States and local schools, without requiring high standards and proven outcomes for children. We reversed this approach—proposing greater local control and authority while expecting measured progress for children, proven by regular testing and revealed to parents. My education plan rested on a simple principle: Every child deserves an equal chance to grow in knowledge and character so that no child will be left behind.

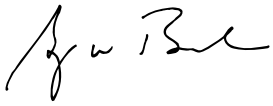
I came to office believing the American people deserved tax relief—and I submitted a plan that offered more than a trillion and a half dollars in tax relief over the next 10 years. This tax relief proposal was combined with a plan to fund national priorities while limiting the growth in Government spending to a reasonable rate. Having inherited an economy that was in recession, it was clear that aggressive action on taxes was needed—and we took that action.

I also came to office believing there is real suffering in the shadow of America's affluence, and that we are called by conscience to respond. Faith-based and community organizations are meeting human needs that no government can hope to address. To assist them in their good works, I created the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives and submitted a plan that would put the Federal Government squarely on the side of America's armies of compassion.

In the first 6 months of my Administration, we made essential progress on other key issues. My trade agenda reflected a commitment to open markets around the world for the benefit of American workers and to provide lower prices and greater choice for American consumers. To improve our environment, we accelerated the cleanup of toxic brownfields, proposed full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and proposed almost five billion dollars over 5 years for the upkeep of our national parks. And to offer our seniors better health care coverage, I proposed doubling funding for Medicare over the next decade and endorsed a framework for its reform. At the core of this reform was a plan to make sure that every senior has access to affordable prescription drugs and that working families could use refundable tax credits to make health insurance more affordable.

In an address to a Joint Session of Congress on February 27, 2001, I said our Nation needs "a clear strategy to confront the threats of the 21st century, threats that are more widespread and less certain. They range from terrorists who threaten with bombs to tyrants in rogue nations intent upon developing weapons of mass destruction." To meet these emerging threats, I called for a significant increase in our defense budget, the development of an effective missile defense, and a technological transformation of America's Armed Forces. American military strength is the key to preserving peace, protecting human dignity, and extending human freedom.

The Presidency has been called the "vital center of action." It is an office of great influence and great responsibilities. Yet the success of our Nation ultimately depends on the character of its citizens. During my first 6 months in office, while meeting with countless people and traveling across our country, I saw the decency, compassion, and courage of the American character. Soon these virtues would be tested by terrible events.



Preface

This book contains the papers and speeches of the 43d President of the United States that were issued by the Office of the Press Secretary during the period January 20–June 30, 2001. The material has been compiled and published by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration.

The material is presented in chronological order, and the dates shown in the headings are the dates of the documents or events. In instances when the release date differs from the date of the document itself, that fact is shown in the textnote. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy: Remarks are checked against a tape recording, and signed documents are checked against the original. Textnotes and cross references have been provided by the editors for purposes of identification or clarity. Speeches were delivered in Washington, DC, unless indicated. The times noted are local times. All materials that are printed full-text in the book have been indexed in the subject and name indexes, and listed in the document categories list.

The Public Papers of the Presidents series was begun in 1957 in response to a recommendation of the National Historical Publications Commission. An extensive compilation of messages and papers of the Presidents covering the period 1789 to 1897 was assembled by James D. Richardson and published under congressional authority between 1896 and 1899. Since then, various private compilations have been issued, but there was no uniform publication comparable to the Congressional Record or the United States Supreme Court Reports. Many Presidential papers could be found only in the form of mimeographed White House releases or as reported in the press. The Commission therefore recommended the establishment of an official series in which Presidential writings, addresses, and remarks of a public nature could be made available.

The Commission's recommendation was incorporated in regulations of the Administrative Committee of the Federal Register, issued under section 6 of the Federal Register Act (44 U.S.C. 1506), which may be found in title 1, part 10, of the Code of Federal Regulations.

A companion publication to the Public Papers series, the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, was begun in 1965 to provide a broader range of Presidential materials on a more timely basis to meet the needs of the contemporary reader. Beginning with the administration of Jimmy Carter, the Public Papers series expanded its coverage to include additional material as printed in the Weekly Compilation. That coverage provides a listing of the President's daily schedule and meetings, when announced, and other items of general interest issued by the Office of the Press Secretary. Also included are lists of the President's nominations submitted to the Senate, materials released by the Office of the Press Secretary that are not

printed full-text in the book, and proclamations, Executive orders, and other Presidential documents released by the Office of the Press Secretary and published in the *Federal Register*. This information appears in the appendixes at the end of the book.

Volumes covering the administrations of Presidents Herbert Hoover, Harry S. Truman, Dwight D. Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard Nixon, Gerald R. Ford, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George Bush, and William J. Clinton are also included in the Public Papers series.

The Public Papers of the Presidents publication program is under the direction of Frances D. McDonald, Managing Editor, Office of the Federal Register. The series is produced by the Presidential and Legislative Publications Unit, Gwendolyn J. Henderson, Chief. The Chief Editor of this book was Karen Howard Ashlin, assisted by Brad Brooks, Gwen H. Estep, Kathleen M. Fargey, Stephen J. Frattini, Christopher Gushman, Margaret A. Hemmig, Maxine Hill, Alfred Jones, Loretta C. Jones, Jennifer S. Mangum, Stacey A. Mulligan, Michael J. Sullivan, and Karen A. Thornton.

The frontispiece and photographs used in the portfolio were supplied by the White House Photo Office. The typography and design of the book were developed by the Government Printing Office under the direction of Bruce R. James, Public Printer.

Raymond A. Mosley
Director of the Federal Register

John W. Carlin
Archivist of the United States

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Secretary of Energy	Spencer Abraham
Secretary of Education	Roderick R. Paige
Secretary of Veterans Affairs	Anthony J. Principi
Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency	Christine Todd Whitman
United States Trade Representative	Robert B. Zoellick
Director of the Office of Management and Budget	Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr.
Chief of Staff	Andrew H. Card, Jr.

Administration of George W. Bush

2001

Inaugural Address
January 20, 2001

Thank you, all. Chief Justice Rehnquist, President Carter, President Bush, President Clinton, distinguished guests, and my fellow citizens. The peaceful transfer of authority is rare in history, yet common in our country. With a simple oath, we affirm old traditions and make new beginnings.

As I begin, I thank President Clinton for his service to our Nation, and I thank Vice President Gore for a contest conducted with spirit and ended with grace.

I am honored and humbled to stand here where so many of America's leaders have come before me, and so many will follow. We have a place, all of us, in a long story, a story we continue but whose end we will not see. It is a story of a new world that became a friend and liberator of the old, the story of a slaveholding society that became a servant of freedom, the story of a power that went into the world to protect but not possess, to defend but not to conquer.

It is the American story, a story of flawed and fallible people united across the generations by grand and enduring ideals. The grandest of these ideals is an unfolding American promise that everyone belongs, that everyone deserves a chance, that no insignificant person was ever born.

Americans are called to enact this promise in our lives and in our laws. And though our Nation has sometimes halted and sometimes delayed, we must follow no other course.

Through much of the last century, America's faith in freedom and democracy was a rock in a raging sea. Now it is a seed upon the wind, taking root in many nations. Our democratic faith is more than the creed of our country. It is the inborn hope of our humanity, an ideal we carry but do not own, a trust we bear and pass along. Even after nearly 225 years, we have a long way yet to travel.

While many of our citizens prosper, others doubt the promise, even the justice of our own country. The ambitions of some Americans are limited by failing schools and hidden prejudice and the circumstances of their birth. And sometimes our differences run so deep, it seems we share a continent but not a country. We do not accept this, and we will not allow it.

Our unity, our Union, is a serious work of leaders and citizens and every generation. And this is my solemn pledge: I will work to build a single nation of justice and opportunity. I know this is in our reach because we are guided by a power larger than ourselves, who creates us equal, in His image, and we are confident in principles that unite and lead us onward.

America has never been united by blood or birth or soil. We are bound by ideals that move us beyond our backgrounds, lift us above our interests, and teach us what it means to be citizens. Every child must be taught these principles. Every citizen must uphold them. And every immigrant, by embracing these ideals, makes our country more, not less, American.

Today we affirm a new commitment to live out our Nation's promise through civility, courage, compassion, and character. America at its best matches a commitment to principle with a concern for civility. A civil society demands from each of us good will and respect, fair dealing and forgiveness.

Some seem to believe that our politics can afford to be petty because in a time

of peace the stakes of our debates appear small. But the stakes for America are never small. If our country does not lead the cause of freedom, it will not be led. If we do not turn the hearts of children toward knowledge and character, we will lose their gifts and undermine their idealism. If we permit our economy to drift and decline, the vulnerable will suffer most.

We must live up to the calling we share. Civility is not a tactic or a sentiment; it is the determined choice of trust over cynicism, of community over chaos. And this commitment, if we keep it, is a way to shared accomplishment.

America at its best is also courageous. Our national courage has been clear in times of depression and war, when defeating common dangers defined our common good. Now we must choose if the example of our fathers and mothers will inspire us or condemn us. We must show courage in a time of blessing by confronting problems instead of passing them on to future generations.

Together we will reclaim America's schools before ignorance and apathy claim more young lives. We will reform Social Security and Medicare, sparing our children from struggles we have the power to prevent. And we will reduce taxes to recover the momentum of our economy and reward the effort and enterprise of working Americans.

We will build our defenses beyond challenge, lest weakness invite challenge. We will confront weapons of mass destruction, so that a new century is spared new horrors. The enemies of liberty and our country should make no mistake: America remains engaged in the world, by history and by choice, shaping a balance of power that favors freedom.

We will defend our allies and our interests. We will show purpose without arrogance. We will meet aggression and bad faith with resolve and strength. And to all nations, we will speak for the values that gave our Nation birth.

America at its best is compassionate. In the quiet of American conscience, we know that deep, persistent poverty is unworthy of our Nation's promise. And whatever our views of its cause, we can agree that children at risk are not at fault.

Abandonment and abuse are not acts of God; they are failures of love. And the proliferation of prisons, however necessary, is no substitute for hope and order in our souls. Where there is suffering, there is duty. Americans in need are not strangers; they are citizens—not problems but priorities. And all of us are diminished when any are hopeless.

Government has great responsibilities for public safety and public health, for civil rights and common schools. Yet, compassion is the work of a nation, not just a government. And some needs and hurts are so deep they will only respond to a mentor's touch or a pastor's prayer. Church and charity, synagogue and mosque lend our communities their humanity, and they will have an honored place in our plans and in our laws.

Many in our country do not know the pain of poverty. But we can listen to those who do. And I can pledge our Nation to a goal: When we see that wounded traveler on the road to Jericho, we will not pass to the other side.

America at its best is a place where personal responsibility is valued and expected. Encouraging responsibility is not a search for scapegoats; it is a call to conscience. And though it requires sacrifice, it brings a deeper fulfillment. We find the fullness of life not only in options but in commitments. And we find that children and community are the commitments that set us free.

Our public interest depends on private character, on civic duty and family bonds and basic fairness, on uncounted, unhonored acts of decency, which give direction to our freedom.

Sometimes in life we're called to do great things. But as a saint of our times has said,

"Every day we are called to do small things with great love." The most important tasks of a democracy are done by everyone.

I will live and lead by these principles: to advance my convictions with civility, to serve the public interest with courage, to speak for greater justice and compassion, to call for responsibility and try to live it, as well. In all these ways, I will bring the values of our history to the care of our times.

What you do is as important as anything Government does. I ask you to seek a common good beyond your comfort, to defend needed reforms against easy attacks, to serve your Nation, beginning with your neighbor. I ask you to be citizens: Citizens, not spectators; citizens, not subjects; responsible citizens building communities of service and a nation of character.

Americans are generous and strong and decent, not because we believe in ourselves but because we hold beliefs beyond ourselves. When this spirit of citizenship is missing, no Government program can replace it. When this spirit is present, no wrong can stand against it.

After the Declaration of Independence was signed, Virginia statesman John Page wrote to Thomas Jefferson, "We know the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. Do you not think an angel rides in the whirlwind and directs this storm?"

Much time has passed since Jefferson arrived for his inauguration. The years and changes accumulate, but the themes of this day, he would know: our Nation's grand story of courage and its simple dream of dignity.

We are not this story's author, who fills time and eternity with his purpose. Yet, his purpose is achieved in our duty. And our duty is fulfilled in service to one another. Never tiring, never yielding, never finishing, we renew that purpose today, to make our country more just and generous, to affirm the dignity of our lives and every life. This work continues, the story goes on, and an angel still rides in the whirlwind and directs this storm.

God bless you all, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:05 p.m. at the West Front of the Capitol. Prior to the address, Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist administered the oath of office.

Memorandum on Standards of Official Conduct
January 20, 2001

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Standards of Official Conduct

Everyone who enters into public service for the United States has a duty to the American people to maintain the highest standards of integrity in Government. I ask you to ensure that all personnel within your departments and agencies are familiar with, and faithfully observe, applicable ethics laws and regulations, including the following general principles from the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch:

(1) Public service is a public trust, requiring employees to place loyalty to the Constitution, the laws, and ethical principles above private gain.

(2) Employees shall not hold financial interests that conflict with the conscientious performance of duty.

(3) Employees shall not engage in financial transactions using nonpublic Government information or allow the improper use

of such information to further any private interest.

(4) An employee shall not, except as permitted by applicable law or regulation, solicit or accept any gift or other item of monetary value from any person or entity seeking official action from, doing business with, or conducting activities regulated by the employee's agency, or whose interests may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the employee's duties.

(5) Employees shall put forth honest effort in the performance of their duties.

(6) Employees shall not knowingly make unauthorized commitments or promises of any kind purporting to bind the Government.

(7) Employees shall not use public office for private gain.

(8) Employees shall act impartially and not give preferential treatment to any private organization or individual.

(9) Employees shall protect and conserve Federal property and shall not use it for other than authorized activities.

(10) Employees shall not engage in outside employment or activities, including seeking or negotiating for employment, that conflict with official Government duties and responsibilities.

(11) Employees shall disclose waste, fraud, abuse, and corruption to appropriate authorities.

(12) Employees shall satisfy in good faith their obligations as citizens, including all just financial obligations, especially those—such as Federal, State, or local taxes—that are imposed by law.

(13) Employees shall adhere to all laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity for all Americans regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap.

(14) Employees shall endeavor to avoid any actions creating the appearance that they are violating applicable law or the ethical standards in applicable regulations.

Executive branch employees should also be fully aware that their post-employment activities with respect to lobbying and other forms of representation will be bound by the restrictions of 18 U.S.C. 207.

Please thank the personnel of your departments and agencies for their commitment to maintain the highest standards of integrity in Government as we serve the American people.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Proclamation 7403—National Day of Prayer and Thanksgiving, 2001
January 20, 2001

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Nearly 200 years ago, on March 4, 1801, our young Nation celebrated an important milestone in its history, the first transfer of power between political parties, as Thomas Jefferson took the oath of office as President. On this bicentennial of that event, we pause to remember and give thanks to Almighty God for our unbroken heritage of democracy, the peaceful transition of power, and the perseverance of our Government through the challenges of war and peace, want and prosperity, discord and harmony.

President Jefferson also wrote, "The God who gave us life gave us liberty at the same time" and asked, "Can the liberties of a nation be secure when we have removed a conviction that these liberties are of

God?" Indeed, it is appropriate to mark this occasion by remembering the words of President Jefferson and the examples of Americans of the past and today who in times of both joy and need turn to Almighty God in prayer. Times of plenty, like times of crisis, are tests of American character. Today, I seek God's guidance and His blessings on our land and all our people. Knowing that I cannot succeed in this task without the favor of God and the prayers of the people, I ask all Americans to join with me in prayer and thanksgiving.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, by the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim January 21, 2001, a National Day of Prayer and Thanksgiving and call upon the citizens of our Nation to gather together in homes and places of worship to pray alone and together and offer thanksgiving to God for all the blessings of this great and good land. On this day, I call upon Americans to recall all that unites us. Let us become a nation rich not only in material wealth but in ideals—rich in justice and compassion and family love and moral courage. I ask Americans to bow our heads in humility before our Heavenly Father, a God who calls us not to judge our neighbors, but to love them, to ask His guidance upon our Nation and its leaders in every level of government.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fifth.

GEORGE W. BUSH

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., January 24, 2001]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 22, and it was published in *Federal Register* on January 25. It is included here as an example of the proclamations which are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume and compiled annually in title 3 of the *Code of Federal Regulations.*

Remarks at a Swearing-In Ceremony for White House Staff
January 22, 2001

Thank you very much. Thank you. Don't go overboard. [*Laughter*] Sit down, please—no place to sit. [*Laughter*] Okay, don't sit down.

Thank you all for coming. Mr. Vice President, thank you very much. Chief of Staff Card, I'm honored to have you by my side. I started work this morning, and there he was, smiling and ready to go on behalf of the American people.

The First Lady and I are honored to be living here, and we're honored to be hosting this event, the first we've done in this glorious room since the Inauguration.

I want to thank the family members who are here. Thank you for your sacrifice. Thank you for the long hours—accepting the long hours that your loved one is about to put in on behalf of the American people. Some of the folks that are here have worked in past administrations. Some of us, this is a new experience. But for all of us, it is an honor of a lifetime, and it is our privilege to share this together.

I am here to lead the executive branch of Government. You all are here because you have my full confidence. And we are here with the same basic purpose, to serve the American people. We have all taken

an oath, and from this moment on, it is our jobs to honor it.

Today everything is so promising and new. My hope is that the day will never come when any of us take this place for granted and this honor for granted. As we serve, we must always remember three things.

First, we must remember the high standards that come with high office. This begins with careful adherence to the rules. I expect every member of this administration to stay well within the boundaries that define legal and ethical conduct. This means avoiding even the appearance of problems. This means checking and, if need be, doublechecking that the rules have been obeyed. This means never compromising those rules. No one in the White House should be afraid to confront the people they work for, for ethical concerns. And no one should hesitate to confront me, as well. We're all accountable to one another. And above all, we're all accountable to the law and to the American people. My White House Counsel, Al Gonzalez, is my point man on these issues. If you have even a hint of ethical doubt, I urge you to talk to Al.

Second, we must remember that high standards of conduct involve not only obeying the law but showing civility. As we go about our work, there is no excuse for arrogance and never a reason for disrespect toward others. People who work here are highly visible throughout the Government. In many ways, in many of your dealings, you'll be the face and voice of the White House staff. You will be my representative. I expect each of you, as an official of this administration, to be an example of humility and decency and fairness.

And finally, we must all remember that we are here for a reason. You and I and the Vice President share the same goals for our country and the same commitment to achieving them. We are here to make progress. We are not here just to mark time. The next few weeks, we'll affirm the central policy goals of this administration, beginning this week with education reform. Everyone will know where we stand. Everyone will know where we're headed. Every morning I want you to remember these goals. Every evening I want you to review the progress we have made. I want it said of us, at the end of our service, that promises made were promises kept.

On a mantelpiece in this great house is inscribed the prayer of John Adams, that only the wise and honest may rule under this roof. He was speaking of those who live here. But wisdom and honesty are also required of those who work here. I know each of you is capable of meeting that charge.

This is only our second day, but time moves fast around here. So let us begin the work we were hired to do and leave this a better place than we found it.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:10 a.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Republican Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters

January 22, 2001

The President. Thank you all for coming. It's been my honor to host a working lunch with the Speaker and Members from the House and even Members from the United States Senate. This is the beginning of a series of luncheons and dinners that I will have and the Vice President will have with Members of the Congress. If we're to get

an agenda through the Congress, it's best that I be able to personally explain the issues and what I'm attempting to do.

I've told the leadership that they should be expecting a strong education reform package, a tax relief package, and a Medicare and Social Security reform package and a package to help pay the folks in the military more money. And I can't wait to work with them to get the people's business done.

This is not the last time I'm going to see you all over here, nor will the meetings be only Republican; we'll have Democrats come here quite a few times, as well, to get some things done.

So I want to thank you all for coming. I'm honored you're here. It's my first lunch in this part of the White House complex, and it's fitting that it be with Members of the legislative branch. Thanks for coming.

Abortion Funding

Q. Mr. President, are you going to reverse the Executive order allowing abortion funding and counseling—Federal funds for abortion counseling and funding overseas?

The President. Yes, I am.

Q. When will you do that, sir?

The President. Soon.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—Executive orders reversing President Clinton's?

The President. Yes.

Fetal Tissue Research

Q. What about fetal tissue research? What about fetal tissue research?

The President. I'll deal with that issue later.

Resolution of President Clinton's Legal Issues

Q. Mr. President, how do you react to the deal that President Clinton entered into with the Independent Counsel, Robert Ray? What's your interpretation of that agreement, and were you considering a pardon should it have come to that?

The President. I hadn't considered a pardon because the man hadn't been indicted. And my feeling about the actions of last Friday was, it's finally over with; it's now time to move on. And I think the country is pleased that it's time to move on, and that's exactly what we're going to do.

Q. Was it appropriate, sir?

The President. Thank you all. The pleasure is mine, Fournier [Ron Fournier, Associated Press]. [*Laughter*]

Q. Welcome to the White House.

The President. It's an honor to be here.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Reading Roundtable
January 22, 2001

Laura and I have been honored to host a discussion on an incredibly important subject, and that's education and reading. I really appreciate the Secretary of Education for coming, Dr. Rod Paige; and for educators, leaders from all around the country who've come here to the Roosevelt Room.

Phyllis Hunter coined a phrase that I quote a lot, and that is, "Reading is the new civil right." It's the cornerstone of hope and opportunity in America, and we're going to make sure every child has the opportunity to learn to read. That means we're going to have scientific-based

knowledge be the cornerstone of our curriculum. And that's why I appreciate Reid Lyon and others, experts in the field of reading, for being here to help make sure our curriculum reflect that which works.

We're going to diagnose children early and correct problems when we find them. As importantly, I'm going to ask Congress to spend money on teacher training to make sure that our teachers, the heart and soul of the education system, have got the tools necessary to teach children to read.

I'm excited about working with the pros in the field of education. This is not a Republican issue; it's not a Democrat issue; it's not an independent issue; this is an American issue, and the most fundamental of all American issues. If the mission is to make sure the American experience touches every willing heart, every person in the country, it starts with making sure our children learn to read, and it starts with making sure children learn to read early. And one of the key initiatives that we have been discussing is, how do we make sure that we get science-based reading instruction to the youngest of the young? One way is to make sure that Head Start has a reading component as a part of its overall mission.

So I want to thank you all for coming. This is a week where I'm going to, hopefully, focus the Nation's attention on public schools and how the Congress and the executive branch can work together to pass law and appropriate money that will enable Dr. Paige and myself to work on the noblest of all missions, that every single child be educated in America, and not one—I mean not one—be left behind.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:49 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to G. Reid Lyon, chief, Child Development and Behavior Branch, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, Department of Health and Human Services; and Phyllis Hunter, consultant, Texas Reading Initiative.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Democratic Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters
January 22, 2001

Legislative Agenda on Education

The President. Thank you all for coming this afternoon. I've had the honor of hosting a group of distinguished folks who have had experience with Government here, that happen to be of the Democrat persuasion. We had a discussion about—an advisory session about what to think about in Washington, about how to move issues such as education. We've spent a lot of time talking about education and how to get an education agenda moving forward in this important town.

I can't thank the former Senators and a man who has seen enough Klieglights in his day to know what they're all about, and of course, the Ambassador and Bill Gray, the distinguished chairman of the United Negro College Fund, for being here. For me, it's been a very helpful discussion.

Ambassador Strauss said something that's really important and is so true. He reminded me that Democrats are just as patriotic about their country as Republicans, that there is good in everybody. And that's what I'm going to look for. This administration is going to seek the good in everybody and find that ability to come together for the good of the country, as well.

So I want to thank these distinguished citizens of the country for being here, people who brought class and distinction when they held power and set a good legacy for those of us who follow.

Thank you.

Mr. Ambassador, do you want to say something?

Former U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union Robert Strauss. I want to say, all of us are delighted to be here, and all of us are pleased that the President extended this invitation. I think that the group not only is appreciative, but they've tried to be responsible to the discussion.

Thank you.

Q. Mr. President, how do you square your decision—how do you square your decision, Mr. President to——

The President. I'm not sure. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:25 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to William H. Gray III, president, United Negro College Fund. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement to Participants in the March for Life
January 22, 2001

Good afternoon, friends and fellow citizens. Two days ago, Americans gathered on the Washington Mall to celebrate our Nation's ideals. Today, you are gathered to remind our country that one of those ideals is the infinite value of every life.

I deeply appreciate your message and your work. You see the weak and defenseless, and you try to help them. You see the hardship of many young mothers and their unborn children, and you care for them both. In so many ways, you make our society more compassionate and welcoming.

We share a great goal: to work toward a day when every child is welcomed in life and protected in law. We know this will not come easily, or all at once. But the goal leads us onward: to build a culture of life, affirming that every person, at every stage and season of life, is created equal in God's image.

The promises of our Declaration of Independence are not just for the strong, the independent, or the healthy. They are for everyone—including unborn children. We are a society with enough compassion and wealth and love to care for both mothers and their children, to seek the promise and potential in every human life.

I believe that we are making progress toward that goal. I trust in the good hearts of Americans. I trust in the unfolding promise of our country—an expanding circle of inclusion and protection. And I trust in the civility and good sense of our citizens—a willingness to engage our differences in a spirit of tolerance and good will.

All of you marching today have never tired in a good cause. Thank you for your conviction, your idealism, and your courage. May God bless you all.

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

Memorandum on Restoration of the Mexico City Policy
January 22, 2001

Memorandum for the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development

Subject: Restoration of the Mexico City Policy

The Mexico City Policy announced by President Reagan in 1984 required nongovernmental organizations to agree as a condition of their receipt of Federal funds that such organizations would neither perform nor actively promote abortion as a method of family planning in other nations. This policy was in effect until it was rescinded on January 22, 1993.

It is my conviction that taxpayer funds should not be used to pay for abortions or advocate or actively promote abortion, either here or abroad. It is therefore my belief that the Mexico City Policy should be restored. Accordingly, I hereby rescind the "Memorandum for the Acting Administrator of the Agency for International Development, Subject: AID Family Planning Grants/Mexico City Policy," dated January 22, 1993, and I direct the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to reinstate in full all of the requirements of the Mexico City Policy in effect on January 19, 1993.

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this memorandum.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Congressional Education Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters
January 23, 2001

The President. Good morning. I want to welcome you all. I particularly want to welcome senior Members of the Senate and the House. We're here today to discuss a domestic policy issue of high importance, and that's public education, how to make sure every child in America gets educated.

I've always said that public schools, the common schools, issues related to public schools are not a Republican issue or Democrat issue; it's an American issue. And we'll agree on things. We won't agree on things. But we'll always agree that making sure every child is educated is of national importance. It is a major priority. There's a role for the Federal Government. There's a role for the State government. There's a role for local governments. And part of our discussions and eventual legislation will recognize those roles.

And I'm so honored that the Senators came over and Members of the House, the leadership, that's going to help carry legislation. I believe the best way for the Vice President and I to help the legislative process is to discuss issues in a frank and open way, and that's the beginning of a process here.

So thank you all for coming. I'm honored you're here.

Campaign Finance Reform

Q. Mr. President, Senator McCain yesterday said that he has a mandate. Do you agree with him, that he has a mandate? And if so, what——

The President. I'm going to meet with the Senator tomorrow night to discuss

issues of concern for him. I suspect one of them might be campaign funding reform. But I'll let you know how the conversation goes. I'm confident it's going to be friendly and productive. John and I are friends. I remember we debated this issue several times. I think you might have been there.

Q. Do you think he has a mandate?

The President. And I think there's a need to discuss good campaign funding reform, and we will.

Legislative Agenda on Education

Q. How much of a sticking point for Democrats do you think your school choice or voucher program is? And are you willing to give ground in order to get a broader deal?

The President. I think that there is consensus on a couple of things: One, accountability is the cornerstone for reform; and secondly, in order for there to be an accountability system that's got merit, there has to be a consequence. And that's what we're going to discuss. Representative Miller from the State of California understands that accountability is crucial for success. And so does Boehner, and I hope the Senators do. I haven't had a chance to speak specifically with Senator Kennedy yet. I'm about to.

But we've got to measure, and there needs to be flexibility at the local level to make sure that local folks can chart the path of excellence. But in order for an accountability system to work, there has to be consequences. And I believe one of the most important consequences will be, after a period of time, giving schools the time to adjust and districts time to try different things if they're failing, that parents ought to be given different options.

If children are trapped in schools that will not teach and will not change, there has to be a different consequence. None of us at the Federal Government should try to impose a school voucher plan on States and local jurisdictions. That's not the prerogative of the Federal Government, as far as I'm concerned. But to the extent that the Federal Government spends money, we ought to expect good results and good consequences.

Q. Thank you.

The President. I can't tell you what a pleasure it is.

California Electricity Shortages

Q. [*Inaudible*]—to do about the California crisis?

The President. You'll hear something today.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:20 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Representative George Miller. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on Submitting the Education Reform Plan to the Congress
January 23, 2001

Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I appreciate you being here, and it's good to see a former Secretary of Education here. Lamar, thank you very much for coming, surrounded by two fine Texans, I might add. [*Laughter*] You are in good position. I was going to say a rose between two thorns, but—[*laughter*]—Diana Natalicio is not a thorn. She's a fabulous educator in the great State of Texas. Miller, on the other hand—[*laughter*]. At any rate, I'm glad you all are here. It's good to see so many faces of friends, welcome you to our new temporary abode.

This is an important moment for my administration because I spent such a long amount of time campaigning on education reform. It's been the hallmark of my time as Governor of Texas. My focus will be on making sure every child is educated, as the President of the United States, as well.

Both parties have been talking about education reform for quite a while. It's time to come together to get it done so that we can truthfully say, "In America, no child will be left behind, not one single child."

We share a moment of exceptional promise, a new administration, a newly sworn-in Congress. And we have a chance to think anew and act anew. All of us are impatient with the old lines of division. All of us want a different attitude here in the Nation's Capital. All in this room, as well as across the country, know things must change.

We must confront the scandal of illiteracy in America, seen most clearly in high-poverty schools where nearly 70 percent of fourth graders are unable to read at a basic level. We must address the low standing of America test scores amongst industrialized nations in math and science, the very subjects most likely to affect our future competitiveness. We must focus the spending of Federal tax dollars on things that work. Too often, we have spent without regard for results, without judging success or failure from year to year. We must face up to the plague of school violence. With an average of 3 million crimes committed against students and teachers inside public schools every year, that's unacceptable in our country.

Change will not come by adding a few new Federal programs to the old. If we work only at the edges, our influence will be confined to the margins. We need real reform. Change will not come by disdaining or dismantling the Federal role of education. I believe strongly in local control of schools. I trust local folks to chart the path to excellence.

But educational excellence for all is a national issue and, at this moment, is a Presidential priority. I have seen how real education reform can lift up scores and schools and effectively change lives. And real education reform reflects four basic commitments.

First, children must be tested every year in reading and math—every single year. Not just in the third grade or the eighth grade, but in the third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh and eighth grade.

I oppose a national test, one designed here in Washington, DC, because I know it would undermine local control of schools and undermine State curricula. But States should test each student each year. Without yearly testing, we don't know who is falling behind and who needs help. Without yearly testing, too often we don't find failure until it is too late to fix.

Consider what some parents face under the current system in some States. A child may pass the third grade reading test; he or she gets in the eighth grade and, lo and behold, fails the eighth grade test. And the parent says, "Who do I hold accountable? What happened? My child was successful in the third, and here he or she is in the eighth. What went wrong? How come? Where did the system let me down?"

Too much precious time has elapsed in this case for us to achieve what we want: every child being able to learn. Testing every child every year is the way to stop the cycle. We must care enough to ask how our children are doing. We must have the data to know how poor and minority children are doing, to see if we're closing the achievement gap in America.

Annual measurement is a special concern of mine. I understand it's crucial—it's a crucial part of a solid reform package. But the good news is, I'm not alone. Take, for example, Congressman George Miller from California. Some might think it odd that

the President—a Republican President be mentioning a Democrat, a Member of the House. But he and I have had discussions already. He understands the importance of strong accountability. And we're going to work together to make sure this is an integral part of a reform package coming through the House and Senate.

Secondly, the agents of reform must be schools and school districts, not bureaucracies. Teachers and principals, local and State leaders must have the responsibility to succeed and the flexibility to innovate. One size does not fit all when it comes to educating the children in America. School districts, school officials, educational entrepreneurs should not be hindered by excessive rules and redtape and regulation.

The principle here is a basic one. If local schools do not have the freedom to change, they cannot be held accountable for failing to change. Authority and accountability must be aligned at the local level, or schools will have a convenient excuse for failure: "I would have done it this way but some central office or Washington, DC, caused me to do it another way."

Flexibility in education spending is a special concern of Members of both parties with whom I've discussed. Today I had a good meeting with the chairman of the Education Committee in the House, John Boehner. I know he shares my passion for flexibility at the local level, as do people like Senator Judd Gregg or Tim Hutchinson.

Third, many of our schools, particularly low-income schools, will need help in the transition to higher standards. When a State sets standards, we must help schools achieve those standards. We must measure. We must know. And if a school or school district falls short, we must understand that help should be applied. Senator Jeff Bingaman of New Mexico brought this up to our attention, about the need to make sure there is a transition period between the moment of consequence and the first indication of failure.

Once failing schools are identified, we will help them improve. We will help them help themselves. Our goal is to improve public education. We want success. And when schools are willing to accept the reality that the accountability system points out and are willing to change, we will help them.

Fourth, American children must not be left in persistently dangerous or failing schools. When schools do not teach and will not change, parents and students must have other meaningful options. And when children and teenagers go to school afraid of being threatened or attacked or worse, our society must make it clear, it's the ultimate betrayal of adult responsibility.

Parents and children who have only bad options must eventually get good options if we're to succeed all across the country. There are differences of opinions about what those options should be. I made my opinion very clear in the course of the campaign and will take my opinion to the Hill and let folks debate it.

Today I was pleased to see that Senator Joe Lieberman brought up his plan that includes different options for parents. It's a great place to begin. He and I understand that an accountability system must have a consequence. Otherwise, it's not much of an accountability system.

These four principles are the guides to our education reform package. Yet today I'm offering more than principles; I'm sending a series of specific proposals to the United States Congress, my own blueprint for reform. I want to begin our discussion in detail with the Members of the House and the Senate because I know we need to act by this summer so that the people at the local level can take our initiatives and plan for the school year beginning next fall.

I'm going to listen to suggestions from folks. If somebody has got a better idea, I hope they bring it forward, because the Secretary and I will listen. We've got one thing in mind: an education system that's

responsive to the children; an education system that educates every child; an education system that I'm confident can exist; one that's based upon sound, fundamental curriculum; one that starts teaching children to read early in life; one that focuses on systems that do work; one that heralds our teachers and makes sure they've got the necessary tools to teach; but one that says every child can learn. In this great land called America, no child will be left behind.

It's an honor to be here. I'm so thrilled you all came. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:08 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Education Roderick R. Paige, who introduced the President; former Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander; Diana Natalicio, president, University of Texas at El Paso; and Charles Miller, chairman, Meridian Advisors, Ltd.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Education Reform Plan
January 23, 2001

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Enclosed please find my blueprint for nationwide education reform entitled, "No Child Left Behind." I look forward to working with the Congress to ensure that these principles are turned into acceptable legislation that leaves no child behind.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate. This letter was released on the White House Web site.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Bipartisan Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters
January 24, 2001

The President. I'm honored to host the leaders of the Senate and the House. I want to thank you all for coming. I really, really appreciate it. This is the sixth meeting I've had with legislators since I've been sworn in. It is a habit I intend to keep, because I understand the best way to advance an agenda for the country is to work together.

I hope people are now beginning to realize that when I said the executive branch is willing to work with the legislative branch and do what's right for the country, it's not hollow words; it's what I believe we need to do.

Expectations are that we can't come together to get things done. Our mission is to exceed the expectations. So I want to thank you all so much for coming. We're going to have a frank dialog about a lot of issues, and I'm going to start by reminding that we know the difference between the executive branch and the legislative branch, but I do believe the President and the Vice President can play a part, a strong part, in helping advance an American agenda.

So thanks for coming. I'd be glad to answer a few questions.

Attorney-General-Designate John Ashcroft

Q. Sir, I'm wondering about the Ashcroft confirmations. There seems to be little question that he's going to be confirmed, and yet there's this one week delay. I'm wondering, what do you think Democrats are doing?

The President. I think they're making sure that when they confirm him, all questions have been answered.

Efforts at Bipartisanship

Q. Sir, where is the common ground on the issues that really divide the two sides, specifically the size of your tax cut and on school vouchers? How can you possibly reach agreement on those two issues?

The President. We'll just have to see. That's part of what a dialog is all about. I think that it's important for me to explain my position. It's important for me to hear other's positions. It's important for me to understand where there's resistance and why. But it all happens with good, honest discussion, a frank discussion about positions.

I look forward to explain to any Member that's concerned about tax relief and why, why I proposed it. And I think the evidence is going to become more and more clear that the economy is—it's not as hopeful as we'd like, which I hope will strengthen my case.

Q. Mr. President, you talked about frank and honest discussions. Are you willing to give on either one of those issues, or is there a——

The President. Well I'm certainly not willing to negotiate with myself. [*Laughter*] Particularly in your column. [*Laughter*]

Legislative Agenda on Education

Q. You talked about bipartisanship, sir, but you've also issued legislation or legislative proposals prior to meeting with the Democrats to work on negotiations. Does that imply that you want them to just take your positions and pass them?

The President. It is in recognition of what a Presidential campaign is all about. I don't believe Dick and I would be sitting here had we not taken strong positions on key issues. And I told the American people if I had the honor of being the President, I would submit those positions I was campaigning on to the legislative branch, and that's exactly what I've done.

So if you look at the education proposals we submitted to the Congress, those are based on what I campaigned on. That's exactly what I told the people I would do, and that's what I'm here to remind the Members of the Congress. That's what I am going to do. And I can't wait to have an honest discussion about education, for example, the cornerstone of which is strong accountability.

And I'm going to make the case here, and I'll continue to make the case to anybody who will listen that in order to make sure every child is educated—I mean every child—we must measure—we must understand whether or not children are learning, because the likelihood of poor children being shuffled through the system is increased if we don't measure.

And I hope we can find people—I hope people will listen, because I feel passionately on the subject.

Q. Sir, would you be—a proposal that didn't include——

The President. John [John Roberts, CBS News], it's a pleasure. One question per session.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:25 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at the Swearing-In Ceremony for Roderick R. Paige as Secretary of Education

January 24, 2001

Thank you very much. Mr. Vice President, thank you very much; Dr. Paige, family members. I look out and see so many Members from the United States Senate. Mr. Chairman, thank you for coming. Senator Kennedy, I appreciate you being here, as well. I don't want to skip anybody, but the reason I mention those two, they happen to be the chairman and ranking minority of the Education Committee. I see Members from the House who are here. Thank you all for coming, as well, of course, Senator Hutchison, from the home State of Dr. Paige and the President—[*laughter*]—John Culberson from the district which represents Houston. So, thank you for coming. I am honored you are here.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is an honor to witness the swearing-in of a man who will help us see important reforms for education become reality.

The Vice President and I were so pleased to be invited and are pleased to be here in this important building. It is an important moment, and we certainly were not going to miss it. I wanted to see the beginning of a new era in public education.

Dr. Paige and I share a basic commitment: We will work to bring excellence to all public schools all across America. I picked a really good man to run this Department, a man of integrity, a man of common sense, a down-to-earth man who knows how to get the job done.

My administration has no greater priority than education, and Dr. Paige and I share that urgency. And there's no greater champion of reform than the man I am about to witness be sworn in as the Secretary of Education.

Every problem now facing our Nation's public schools Dr. Paige faced as superintendent of the Houston Independent School District: children unable to read at basic levels; falling scores in science and math; problems with discipline and order. Dr. Paige answered those challenges with the spirit we must now bring to all our schools and all our districts in every State.

He did not tolerate indifference or mediocrity. He demanded the highest standards of students in schools, and people rose to the challenge. He proved that poverty does not need to be a barrier to achievement. He stressed reading as the key to all learning, and he measured progress, holding schools accountable for results. As Dr. Paige takes his new assignment, Houston is now a city proud of its schools and a city more hopeful for its children.

Rod Paige gained his passion for education from his own background. His mother was a librarian, and his dad was a school principal. His three sisters have dedicated their careers to teaching and education. And we welcome them to this ceremony today.

In his distinguished career, Rod Paige has seen firsthand what works. He has not just talked about education reform; he's practiced it. And that's why I picked him. He has shown an ability to reach across party lines, to cross old divisions for the sake of our children. I value all these qualities, and our country needs them.

We have great and urgent work to do. I'm honored to have this good man to be our partner in reform.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:24 p.m. in the Barnard Auditorium at the Department of Education. In his remarks, he referred to Senator James M. Jeffords, chairman, Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions; and Representative John

Culberson, newly elected to Texas' Seventh Congressional District. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary Paige.

Remarks at Merritt Extended Elementary School
January 25, 2001

It's always a good sign when the principal gets a standing ovation—[*laughter*]—from teachers and parents. Having spent some quality time with you, I now understand why.

First, Mr. Superintendent, thank you very much. Your reputation is a strong one because you believe every child can learn and are willing to work hard and make the tough decisions to make sure every child does learn in the District. Mr. Superintendent, thanks for coming.

I am so pleased and honored that the chairman of the Senate Education Committee and the ranking minority leader, Senator Jeffords and Senator Kennedy, are here; Chairman Boehner, Representative Miller came as well. You all did not have to come. And for you to come is not only a great honor for this school, but Laura and I really appreciate it.

I'm also pleased the First Lady is here. I always used to say, you can always judge the nature of a man by the company he keeps. [*Laughter*] And I keep pretty darn good company—[*laughter*]—particularly when it comes to children and reading and education. She is a former public school librarian who loves children, who loves books, and has got the ability to combine the two. And I love her.

Dr. Shannon, thanks for coming. Those of us who have been involved with public education know this irrefutable fact, that the quality of a school depends on the quality of a principal; that when you find a good principal, the CEO of a school, you'll find a school that achieves what we all want: every child learning.

And there are some basic principles involved. One is to have leadership, not only at the district level but at the school level, set the highest of high standards. Leaders that understand that every child can learn and refuse to accept excuses when they don't. Dr. Shannon believes that way. She asked a question, "Why aren't our children achieving?" And when they begin to achieve, she raises the bar. That's what a leader does.

Secondly, and the reason we've come to Merritt, besides getting out of the White House—[*laughter*]—is to herald what happens inside the walls here. And what happens here is there is a strong sense of accountability, which means there is a strong sense of the possible. Accountability is so important. And by accountability I mean testing children to determine whether or not children are learning. I believe it's the cornerstone of reform. I believe it's the essence of excellence in education, and I believe it's important to do so, to test every year, to make sure children are not left behind.

I worry about a system that doesn't test, because I ask the question, like Dr. Shannon asked the question, "How do you know if you don't?" I worry about a system that periodically tests, because one year you may test, and everything is fine. In 4 years, you measure again, and all of a sudden something isn't fine, and you've missed 4 years of opportunity to make sure a child doesn't slip behind.

Accountability is important for students. It's important for—and I know students don't like to take tests, and I'm confident the parents here heard the same thing

Laura and I heard when our daughters went to Austin High School, "We're sick of tests." And my answer was, "Well, I'm sorry you're sick of it, but we want to know. We, the adults, want to know whether or not you're learning, because if you're not, we expect something else to happen." So it's important for children to take tests so they can tell how they stand.

It's important for parents. There's a lot of discussion about parental involvement. Senator Kennedy asked a very good question—how is parental involvement? I thought the principal gave a very good answer. But there's no better way to encourage parental involvement than to diagnose, on a child-by-child basis, where a child stands. There's no better way to get a parent's attention than for a principal to send the word, "Well, we're having a little trouble with your child. We want your child to succeed."

The worst thing that can happen from a parent's perspective is there be no information. The worst thing that can happen is that the parent think everything is fine—"Well, my child may have passed a test in the third grade, but there's been no measurement in the fourth, fifth, or sixth, so I will just assume as a parent that everything is fine"—and then wake up and realize things aren't fine. To me, that's a shame, when and if our systems do that to parents.

And finally, measurement is important for management and teachers. First, I want to thank the teachers. Teaching is a noble profession. We need more teachers. And one of the jobs that Laura is going to take on—and to a certain extent, I hope I can, too—is to encourage youngsters to become teachers. That means, of course, safe classrooms. It means making sure teachers can teach a curriculum that works.

There's nothing better than combining the love of a teacher with the talent and tools necessary to be able to make sure children learn. But it also means convincing teachers of the importance and power of accountability. A good teacher welcomes accountability, because a good teacher understands that measurement is the kernel for success. A good teacher will be able to see in real stark terms the fruits of his or her labor. A good teacher is somebody who says, "Give me a chance to succeed, and I can prove I can succeed."

There's a lot of people in our society who fear accountability. Dr. Shannon, when asked by one of the Members of the congressional delegation about accountability, she said, "At first people were afraid of accountability." And I can understand that. If you haven't been held accountable, and all of a sudden somebody starts holding you accountable, it's going to create a certain sense of anxiety. But I suspect she'll testify to this fact, that once the accountability measures came in place, once people got used to what it meant to be accountable—that accountability is not a tool to punish but a tool to reward and a tool necessary to correct deficiencies; it's a positive tool; it's a positive application—then people begin to accept the importance of a strong measurement system.

So we're here to applaud leadership and teachers, and we're here to applaud a school and a district that has got a vision, a vision of high standards and strong measurement systems; a school that not only measures, but when it finds deficiency, corrects; a school that recognizes an accountability will work when you view each child as a child, not as some group—part of a group. An accountability system says every child matters, and when we find a child deficient, we're going to correct.

Some say, "The accountability systems tend to restrict curriculum, that, oh, all the school will do is teach the test." This school proves that's not the case. This school focuses on basic education in reading and math. And by the way, they've got a fabulous curriculum for reading, one that works.

But this school also is a school that enriches beyond the basics of reading and math. It's a school that's got a curriculum

that is focused on basic education, but it's a school also that understands the importance of the arts. It's a school that broadens the horizons of the students.

We're here to tout excellence and to thank—to thank the good folks in this institution, inside this building, who love our children and are willing to put their love into practice in a system that works.

So, Dr. Shannon, thank you very much for having us. We're so honored to be here. Again, I want to thank the Members of the congressional delegation that came up, as well. It's a real treat to be able to walk around the halls of a successful school and, most importantly, be able to look children in the eye and wish them all the best, encourage them to go to college. But thanks for having us. It's our honor to be here.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:30 a.m. in the multipurpose room. In his remarks, he referred to Nancy R. Shannon, principal, Merritt Extended Elementary School; and Paul L. Vance, superintendent, District of Columbia Public Schools.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters

January 25, 2001

The President. Thank you all for coming. It's an honor to be here with the chairman and ranking member of the committee, members of the Education Committee in the House of Representatives.

We're going to spend a lot of time talking about education until a bill works its way through the House and the Senate. It's a priority of mine, but the good news is, it's also a priority of the Members here around the table. And I am actually confident that we can forge an education bill that will achieve a lot of objectives: high standards, local control of schools, but the most important objective of all is that every child in America gets educated. It is a national priority, and it's a goal that I'm actually confident that this great Nation can achieve.

So it's an honor to welcome Members of the Congress here to have a frank discussion. I'll be glad to answer a few questions.

Federal Reserve Board Chairman

Q. Is there a comment at all on Mr. Greenspan's comment this morning on the need for tax cuts and the effect it might have on the economy?

The President. I was pleased to hear Mr. Greenspan's words. I felt they were measured and just right. He recognizes that we need good monetary policy and sound fiscal policy to make sure that the economy grows. So I was pleased.

Q. He also seemed to indicate that having the tax cut in place was one of the issues—or one of the main criteria in having a tax cut that would benefit the economy. Do you read that as support for a retroactive tax cut or an accelerated measure?

The President. I don't think Alan Greenspan was supporting any particular plan. I know he wasn't going to the Hill to say, "Well, President Bush has got the right plan." I felt like he was speaking about policy in general. His job is to report to the Congress in an objective way, and that's exactly how I read it.

I've got my view of how to enact tax relief. I suspect others in the Congress will have their view. But what Alan Greenspan was saying to the Nation is that in order

to make sure our economy grows, we've got to have good monetary policy and sound fiscal policy, a component of which is wise spending, as well as tax relief.

Efforts at Bipartisanship

Representative John A. Boehner. Mr. President, on behalf of my colleagues—if I could just say something.

On behalf of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, I want to thank you for inviting us here. All week you've spent a great deal of time talking about your proposal but, more importantly, meeting with Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle, trying to build consensus for this very serious proposal.

And on behalf of all of us, I just want to say, thank you.

The President. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Dinner With Catholic Leaders

Q. Mr. President, you're meeting tonight with the Archbishop; what do you hope to accomplish?

The President. I hope to have a good meal. [*Laughter*] I will tell you something about the cardinal-to-be and the other leaders I'll be meeting with. These are men of great faith, huge compassion for the poor and the oppressed. I can't wait to talk to them about education reform, because education to the cardinal-to-be is a paramount concern. He knows what we know: An educated child is one much more likely to realize the greatness of America. And I'm going to discuss that, and I'm there to listen, as well. It's a huge honor to go there, and I'm looking forward to it.

Faith-Based Initiatives

Q. Mr. President, how do you expect to address concerns about separation of church and state in dealing with faith-based initiatives, both for education and other services?

The President. I'll have a lot to say about that next week. But I will just tell you this, that a compassionate society is one which recognizes the great power of faith, not a particular religion, for the great power faith can play in the lives of everyday citizens and that we in Government must not fear faith-based programs. We must welcome faith-based programs.

This issue was debated, hotly debated in the Congress in previous sessions, all based upon what's called charitable choice, which is a constitutional provision which recognizes Government will never fund religion. But Government should not fear funding programs that can change people's lives, nor should Government fear funding—providing funding for an individual and allow that individual to choose a faith-based program, so long as there is a secular alternative available.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:07 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick of the Archdiocese of Washington, who was elevated to cardinal on February 21 in a ceremony at the Vatican. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at the Swearing-In Ceremony for Colin L. Powell as Secretary of State

January 26, 2001

The President. Thank you all for coming. It is a great privilege for all of us to be here for the swearing in of our new Secretary of State. It's also a great privilege to be here with Alma, the true strength of the Powell family.

As I said in my Inaugural Address, America remains involved in the world, by history and by choice, shaping a balance of power that favors freedom. To achieve this goal, we need a foreign policy that serves America's vital interests and speaks for our highest ideals, a foreign policy that is clear and consistent and confident, true to our values and true to our friends.

To lead this effort at this unique moment in history, I picked a unique leader. Many times over the past four decades, America has called on Colin Powell, and each time he has answered the call. When his country called him to serve as a foot soldier, Colin Powell answered the call. When his country needed him to help defeat a tyrant brutalizing his neighbors and destabilizing a vital region of the world, he answered the call. When America needed him to serve the high purpose of building the character of our young and to promote voluntarism, he answered the call.

Today America calls on Colin Powell again. He is a leader who understands that America must work closely with our friends in times of calm if we want to be able to call upon them in times of crisis. He understands that our Nation is at its best when we project our strength and purpose with humility. He understands that if we do not set our own agenda, it will be set by others, by adversaries abroad or by the crisis of the day.

I know of no better person to be the face and voice of American diplomacy than Colin Powell. His dignity and integrity will add to the strength and authority of America around the world.

Congratulations, Mr. Secretary.

[*At this point, Secretary Powell made brief remarks.*]

The President. Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:53 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Alma Powell, wife of Secretary Powell. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary Powell.

Remarks at a Luncheon With Freshman Members of the House of Representatives
January 26, 2001

Welcome to the people's house. Here we are in week one. I hope you're as enthused about your job as I am about mine. I, first, look forward to saying hello to each of you, and I know the Vice President does, as well.

We've begun a series of policy initiatives. First is education. I've been meeting with mostly the senior Members of the House and Senate—although a few freshmen have shown up in the meetings—to hear about a vision that I think is so important for America, and that is, every child get educated and a way to do so.

There will be other issues that we'll be talking about—military preparedness, Medicare and health care, Social Security reform, tax relief—and I look forward to working with you all. I come to Washington with a positive spirit of the possible, that I refuse to let any bitterness that may be lingering around inhibit us from rising above the expectations of the American people.

The people—some people—take a look at the election and say, "Well, gosh, the country is too divided. Nothing will happen." Our mission is to prove them wrong. It's to not only restore faith in Government

by results, positive results for the people, but also to restore faith in Government by how we behave, by how we conduct the people's business. I know we can do it.

I'm honored you all are here. Congratulations on your elections. We look forward to working with you, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:09 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at the Swearing-In Ceremony for Donald H. Rumsfeld as Secretary of Defense
January 26, 2001

It's a great honor to welcome Secretary Rumsfeld and his wife and family here to the Oval Office. Thank you all for coming.

In swearing in Don Rumsfeld, we have just sworn in a leader of exceptional strength and ability and vision. And I'm grateful that he has returned to service to our country.

Don and I have set three clear goals to guide American defense policy:

First, we will strengthen the bond of trust between the American people and those who wear our Nation's uniform. We'll give them the tools they need and the respect they deserve.

Second, we will work to defend our people and our allies against growing threats, the threats of missiles, information warfare, the threats of biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons. We will confront the new threats of a new century.

Third, we will begin creating the military of the future, one that takes full advantage of revolutionary new technologies. We will promote the peace by redefining the way wars will be fought.

These are great and exciting objectives, and our new Secretary of Defense is uniquely qualified to accomplish them. As a former Navy pilot, Don Rumsfeld understands that if we ever send our forces into harm's way, we must send them fully prepared and equipped for the dangers they face. As a highly successful businessman, he understands that we must modernize and transform the business of defense, getting the value for our taxpayers' money. He is willing to challenge the status quo inside the Pentagon.

As the head of the National Commission on Ballistic Missile Threats, he is the among the country's most informed experts on this vital issue. As a former Congressman, he understands the need to work closely with the Congress. As a former White House Chief of Staff, as a former Secretary of Defense, he understands what it takes to be a leader.

This is an exceptional history of service, and Don Rumsfeld is an exceptional man with integrity and honesty as a cornerstone of his foundation.

Mr. Secretary, congratulations.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:23 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Joyce Rumsfeld, wife of Secretary Rumsfeld. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary Rumsfeld.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Governors and an Exchange With Reporters
January 26, 2001

The President. Let me—first of all, I want to thank my Governor friends for coming. From all around the country, people came—from Idaho, from the South. The head of the National Governors is here, and of course, the soon-to-be-head of the National Governors. I'm honored you all came. It's good to see you in a new setting—for me, at least. And we had a long discussion about education.

These Governors made education their number one priority in their State, and obviously they're keenly aware of the role of Federal Government. And we've had a really good discussion about how to make their jobs easier. And their job is to make sure every child gets educated, which is the noblest of all calling in America.

So I appreciate your coming. It's always good to be talking to people who know what they're talking about. And when it comes to public education, Governors really understand the subject. So I'm grateful you're here.

I'll be glad to answer a few questions.

Vandalism Reports

Q. Mr. President, are you offended, sir, by the reports of vandal—acts of vandalism by outgoing members of the Clinton administration?

The President. I'm so happy to be here—[*laughter*]—that I'm looking forward. There might have been a prank or two; maybe somebody put a cartoon on the wall—that's okay. It's time now to move forward. It's time to focus our attention on what's possible and how to get children educated. I'm excited about what this week has brought. I'm excited about my job.

Stem Cell Research

Q. Mr. President, do you believe that Federal money should be used or spent on fetal tissue or stem cell research derived from induced abortions?

The President. No, I don't.

Q. Will you have an Executive order to that effect?

The President. I believe there's some exciting—I believe there's some wonderful opportunities for adult stem cell research. I believe we can find stem cells from fetuses that died a natural death. But I do not support research from aborted fetuses.

Q. I assume that you'll sign an Executive order to that or make that the law of the land?

The President. I'll let you know when I decide all policy decisions. But I do not—to answer your question, the answer is no.

Russia-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, have you responded to President Putin's letter, and do you plan to review Russian relations with the United States before you go forward in any arms control talks?

The President. I have not responded to the letter yet. I will, of course. I read about it—I might have even read about it before it hit Washington. [*Laughter*]

What was the second half of your question?

Arms Control Talks

Q. Do you plan to review the U.S. relations with the Russians before you start up on arms control talks?

The President. Well, you may remember in the campaign I talked about two aspects about arms. One was that I am going to go forward with, along with Secretary Rumsfeld, about plans for a missile defense system. But I also said that I think it's important for us, commensurate with our ability to keep the peace, to reduce our

nuclear arsenal on our own. And I'm going to fulfill that campaign promise. That may—we'll see how that affects possible arms talks. My point is, is that I want America to lead the nation—lead the world toward a more safe world when it comes to nuclear weaponry. On the offensive side, we can do so. And we can do so on the defensive side, as well.

First Week in Office

Q. Mr. President, it's the end of your first week.

Assistant Press Secretary Gordon Johndroe. Thank you. Lights.

The President. Wait a minute, this may be this—[*laughter*]—end of my first week? Yes.

Q. It's the end of your first week. How do you think it's going? How are you settling in? And were there any surprises?

The President. Oh, let's see. Well, first of all, it's been a great week. I'm excited about my job. I really appreciate—I guess the biggest, most pleasant surprise, if you'd call it that, was how receptive Members of Congress are to come here to the White House to talk about how we can work together. I really appreciate both Republicans and Democrats coming. I think we've met with 90 Members of Congress here in the first week. And I think, to a person, that they're interested in figuring out if we can't exceed the expectations that now exist around the country that nothing is going to get done.

I'm honored to be here, and I'm looking forward to welcoming former President Bush back to his old residence. He's just not going to be sleeping in the master suite this time around. [*Laughter*]

Q. When's he coming? When's he coming?

The President. He's coming today.

Q. How about settling in on a personal basis, on your personal life? Are you settling in——

The President. My personal life, we're great. The dogs—the best news is, the dogs seem to have adjusted. The cat that was howling on the first night is now more comfortable with her territory, and so she's sleeping through the night.

My wife is going to make a great First Lady. She is just as comfortable as she can be with people, no matter if they're with a fancy title or not.

And the White House staff is just remarkably generous people. And we're settling in. And it's a huge honor to live in the people's house. And I understand the honor. And I'm going to uphold the honor.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Parris N. Glendening of Maryland, outgoing chair, and Gov. John Engler of Michigan, incoming chair, National Governors' Association. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Earthquake in India
January 26, 2001

I am saddened by the news of the tragic earthquake centered in India's Gujarat state this morning. I extend my condolences and those of the American people to the families of the many victims in the cities and villages of Gujarat and elsewhere. Earthquakes know no political boundaries: I send condolences to the people affected in neighboring Pakistan as well. We stand ready to assist as needed and as desired by the Governments.

The President's Radio Address
January 27, 2001

A week ago today I received a great honor and all the great responsibilities that come with it. The first order of business is education reform, and we have started strong.

On Tuesday I sent to Congress a package of reforms to turn last year's pledges into this year's laws. I want to make all of our public schools places of learning and high standards and achievement. Our country must offer every child, no matter what his or her background or accent, a fair start in life with a quality education.

I also met this week with congressional leaders in both parties, and we found a lot of agreement on the basic goals of reform. No one is content with the status quo. Most are open to new ideas. Everyone agrees, at least, that the problems are serious and action is urgently needed.

This city has heard so much talk over the years about education reform. So many different approaches have been tried. So many new programs have been created. But we need more than a few new programs; we need a new way of thinking. We must go back to the fundamentals of early reading and regular testing, local control and accountability for results, clear incentives for excellence and clear consequences for failure. These are the elements of the plan I am proposing.

Real reform starts by giving schools and school districts more authority and flexibility. We cannot expect schools to change unless they have the freedom to change. My plan respects the principle of local control. It does not try to run the schools from a central office in Washington. I view principals, teachers, and parents as allies in reform. They are ready to raise the standards, ready to take responsibility and answer for results.

Those results must be measured by testing every child every year, in tests developed and administered by States and local districts, not the Federal Government. Without yearly testing, we do not know who is falling behind and who needs our help. Without yearly testing, too often we don't find failure until it is too late. Testing allows us to help children early, before frustration turns into apathy.

We need to aim high, but we also need to be realistic. Many schools, particularly those in poor neighborhoods, will need help to meet high standards. And they will have it, including a new $5 billion initiative over 5 years for reading instruction. The goal is to improve our public schools. We want them to succeed, and when they're willing to change, we'll give them the tools to do so.

At the same time, we will not continue to pour taxpayers' money into schools that do not teach and will not change. My plan will give every failing school a fair chance to improve, but there will be a deadline, a moment of truth when parents are given better options and their children are given a way out.

There are some honest differences of opinion in Congress about what form these options should take. I have my own plan which would help children in persistently failing schools to go to another public, private, or charter school. Others suggest different approaches, and I am willing to listen. But all reform must be based on a principle: Children and parents who have had only bad choices need better choices. And it is my duty as President to help them.

In sending my plan to Congress, I ask that we act before this summer, when schools begin planning for the next school year. I hope to have the support of Republicans and Democrats alike, and I hope to have your support, as well.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks on Signing Executive Orders With Respect to Faith-Based and Community Initiatives
January 29, 2001

Good morning. Thank you all for coming. I take great joy in making this announcement. It's going to be one of the most important initiatives that my administration not only discusses but implements.

First, it's good to have so many groups represented here: religious and nonreligious; Catholic, Jewish, Protestant, and Muslim; foundations and other nonprofits. I want to thank you all for coming. This is a collection of some of the finest America has got to offer, people who lead with their hearts and, in turn, have changed the communities in which they live for the better. This meeting is a picture of the strength and diversity and compassion of our country.

This is a diverse group, but we share things in common. They provide more than practical help to people in need; they touch and change hearts. And for this, America is deeply appreciative.

Everyone in this room knows firsthand that there are still deep needs and real suffering in the shadow of America's affluence, problems like addiction and abandonment and gang violence, domestic violence, mental illness, and homelessness. We are called by conscience to respond.

As I said in my Inaugural Address, compassion is the work of a nation, not just a government. It is more than the calling of politicians; it is the calling of citizens. It is citizens who turn mean streets into good neighborhoods. It is citizens who turn cold cities into real communities.

It is one of the great goals of my administration to invigorate the spirit of involvement and citizenship. We will encourage faith-based and community programs without changing their mission. We will help all in their work to change hearts while keeping a commitment to pluralism.

I approach this goal with some basic principles. Government has important responsibilities for public health or public order and civil rights, and Government will never be replaced by charities and community groups. Yet when we see social needs in America, my administration will look first to faith-based programs and community groups, which have proven their power to save and change lives. We will not fund the religious activities of any group, but when people of faith provide social services, we will not discriminate against them.

As long as there are secular alternatives, faith-based charities should be able to compete for funding on an equal basis and in a manner that does not cause them to sacrifice their mission. And we will make sure that help goes to large organizations and to small ones, as well. We value large organizations with generations of experience. We also value neighborhood healers, who have only the scars and testimony of their own experience.

Tomorrow I will begin turning these principles into a legislative agenda. I will send to Congress a series of ideas and proposals. Today I want to raise the priority and profile of these issues within my own administration. I want to ensure that faith-based and community groups will always have a place at the table in our deliberations.

In a few moments, I will sign two Executive orders. The first Executive order will

create a new office called the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. The head of this office will report directly to me and be charged with important responsibilities. He will oversee our initiatives on this issue. He will make sure our Government, where it works with private groups, is fair and supportive. And he will highlight groups as national models so others can learn from them.

The second Executive order will clear away the bureaucratic barriers in several important agencies that make private groups hesitate to work with Government. It will establish centers in five agencies—Justice, HUD, HHS, Labor, and Education—to ensure greater cooperation between the Government and the independent sector. These centers will report back on regulatory barriers to working with nonprofit groups and make recommendations on how those barriers can be removed.

I have put this broad effort into the hands of two exceptional people—first, Steve Goldsmith, known as one of the most innovative mayors in America, who pioneered ways to promote community efforts. He will continue to advise me on these issues. And I have asked Steve to serve on the board of the Corporation for National Service. This organization has done some good work in mobilizing volunteers of all ages. I've asked Steve to report to me on how we can make the Corporation do better and to get help where it's most needed.

And secondly, Professor John DiIulio will head the new office I am announcing today. He is one of the most influential social entrepreneurs in America. I can't tell you how honored I am for him to leave his post in academia to join us. He is the author of a respected textbook on American Government. He has a servant's heart on the issues that we will confront. He's worked with disadvantaged children. He has been a major force in mobilizing the city of Philadelphia to support faith-based and community groups.

It's a fantastic team. I'm honored to have them on my team. I look forward to hearing from them, as well as I look forward to working with the people in this room and the social entrepreneurs all across America who've heard the universal call to love a neighbor like they'd like to be loved themselves, to exist and work hard, not out of the love of money but out of the love of their fellow human beings. I'm absolutely convinced the great fabric of the Nation exists in neighborhoods, amongst unsung heroes who do heroic acts on a daily and hourly basis. It's the fabric of the country that makes America unique. It is the power of promise that makes the future so promising—is the power of the missions that stand behind me.

This is an effort that will be an effort from now, the second week of my administration, to the last week of my administration, because I am confident that this initiative, when fully implemented, will help us realize the dream that America—its hopes, its promise, its greatness will extend its reach throughout every single neighborhood all across the land.

And now it is my honor to sign the two Executive orders.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:55 a.m. in the Indian Treaty Room at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. The Executive orders are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Executive Order 13198—Agency Responsibilities With Respect to Faith-Based and Community Initiatives
January 29, 2001

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in order to help the Federal Government coordinate a national effort to expand opportunities for faith-based and other community organizations and to strengthen their capacity to better meet social needs in America's communities, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Establishment of Executive Department Centers for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. (a) The Attorney General, the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall each establish within their respective departments a Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (Center).

(b) Each executive department Center shall be supervised by a Director, appointed by the department head in consultation with the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (White House OFBCI).

(c) Each department shall provide its Center with appropriate staff, administrative support, and other resources to meet its responsibilities under this order.

(d) Each department's Center shall begin operations no later than 45 days from the date of this order.

Sec. 2. Purpose of Executive Department Centers for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. The purpose of the executive department Centers will be to coordinate department efforts to eliminate regulatory, contracting, and other programmatic obstacles to the participation of faith-based and other community organizations in the provision of social services.

Sec. 3. Responsibilities of Executive Department Centers for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. Each Center shall, to the extent permitted by law: (a) conduct, in coordination with the White House OFBCI, a department-wide audit to identify all existing barriers to the participation of faith-based and other community organizations in the delivery of social services by the department, including but not limited to regulations, rules, orders, procurement, and other internal policies and practices, and outreach activities that either facially discriminate against or otherwise discourage or disadvantage the participation of faith-based and other community organizations in Federal programs;

(b) coordinate a comprehensive departmental effort to incorporate faith-based and other community organizations in department programs and initiatives to the greatest extent possible;

(c) propose initiatives to remove barriers identified pursuant to section 3(a) of this order, including but not limited to reform of regulations, procurement, and other internal policies and practices, and outreach activities;

(d) propose the development of innovative pilot and demonstration programs to increase the participation of faith-based and other community organizations in Federal as well as State and local initiatives; and

(e) develop and coordinate department outreach efforts to disseminate information more effectively to faith-based and other community organizations with respect to programming changes, contracting opportunities, and other department initiatives, including but not limited to Web and Internet resources.

Sec. 4. Additional Responsibilities of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Labor Centers. In addition to those responsibilities described in section 3 of this order, the Department

of Health and Human Services and the Department of Labor Centers shall, to the extent permitted by law: (a) conduct a comprehensive review of policies and practices affecting existing funding streams governed by so-called "Charitable Choice" legislation to assess the department's compliance with the requirements of Charitable Choice; and (b) promote and ensure compliance with existing Charitable Choice legislation by the department, as well as its partners in State and local government, and their contractors.

Sec. 5. Reporting Requirements. (a) Report. Not later than 180 days after the date of this order and annually thereafter, each of the five executive department Centers described in section 1 of this order shall prepare and submit a report to the White House OFBCI.

(b) Contents. The report shall include a description of the department's efforts in carrying out its responsibilities under this order, including but not limited to:

(1) a comprehensive analysis of the barriers to the full participation of faith-based and other community organizations in the delivery of social services identified pursuant to section 3(a) of this order and the proposed strategies to eliminate those barriers; and

(2) a summary of the technical assistance and other information that will be available to faith-based and other community organizations regarding the program activities of the department and the preparation of applications or proposals for grants, cooperative agreements, contracts, and procurement.

(c) Performance Indicators. The first report, filed 180 days after the date of this order, shall include annual performance indicators and measurable objectives for department action. Each report filed thereafter shall measure the department's performance against the objectives set forth in the initial report.

Sec. 6. Responsibilities of All Executive Departments and Agencies. All executive departments and agencies (agencies) shall: (a) designate an agency employee to serve as the liaison and point of contact with the White House OFBCI; and

(b) cooperate with the White House OFBCI and provide such information, support, and assistance to the White House OFBCI as it may request, to the extent permitted by law.

Sec. 7. Administration and Judicial Review. (a) The agencies' actions directed by this Executive Order shall be carried out subject to the availability of appropriations and to the extent permitted by law.

(b) This order does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity against the United States, its agencies or instrumentalities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
January 29, 2001.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:45 a.m., January 30, 2001]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on January 31. It is included here as an example of the Executive orders which are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume and compiled annually in title 3 of the *Code of Federal Regulations.*

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With the National Energy Policy Development Group and an Exchange With Reporters
January 29, 2001

The President. This is the first in a series of meetings which will be chaired by Vice President Cheney on discussing our Nation's energy situation—can't think of a better man to run it than the Vice President.

I've also asked, and he has asked, that senior members of the Cabinet participate. This is a matter of high concern for this administration, because it's a matter of high concern for our Nation. It's becoming very clear to the country that demand is outstripping supply, that there are more users of electricity and natural gas than there is new units being found, and we've got to do something about that in the country.

This administration is concerned about the people who work for a living, concerned about people who struggle every day to get ahead. And we understand—fully understand—what high energy costs can mean to people in America, and we're going to formulate a strategy to deal with it. And the Vice President's going to head the task force to report back to me, and to the Nation, how best to cope with high energy prices and how best to cope with reliance upon foreign oil, how best to encourage the development of pipelines and power-generating capacity in the country so that we can help our fellow citizens.

We have been dealing with this issue, obviously, because of the State of California's woes. And I appreciate very much the way you handled it, Mr. Secretary. The Governor of California asked for a 2 week extension of mandatory sales of power and natural gas. We've granted that extension for 2 weeks. It looks like they're making progress in California, and we're pleased, because the situation is going to be best remedied in California by Californians.

We're very aware in this administration that the situation in California is beginning to affect neighboring States. Western Governors came to see the Vice President, and they came to see me, as well. And they're deeply concerned about the situation spreading beyond the California borders, and so are we. And so the task force that's being assembled will not only deal with the very shortrun issues dealing with the West but, obviously, the longer term issues that will be confronting our country for a while, unless we're willing to act boldly and swiftly, which we will do.

Thank you for coming.

Super Bowl XXXV

Q. [*Inaudible*]—questions?

The President. Next time. Give you a chance to really think of some good ones. [*Laughter*] I've got some suggestions—I've got some suggestions. First answer—you can think of the question—first answer is, Ravens. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:35 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham and Gov. Gray Davis of California. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters
January 29, 2001

The President. Mr. Secretary, you better move over before you get trampled by the hungry caterpillar. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank the two chairmen from the Senate and the House for coming to visit us. I appreciate you being here, Mr. Secretary; of course, the Vice President. We've had a very—we've had a discussion—a couple of key issues. One, I was informing the chairmen that today we're sending up to the Hill our Immediate Helping Hand proposal, which is help for prescription drugs for seniors. I appreciate them hearing me out as to the rationale to send it up.

I was pleased to hear there is some sentiment on the Hill for quick action for Medicare reform, a reform package which would include prescription drugs. And secondly, of course, we talked about tax relief, tax simplification, and tax fairness. They brought a favorable report that members from both parties are beginning to talk positively about tax relief and the positive effects it will have on our economy, on the lives of our average citizens. So I want to thank them for coming.

I'd be glad to answer a few questions. Yes, John.

National Energy Policy Development Group

Q. Sir, on your energy task force, is this seeking political cover, sir, to promote your campaign to open up the wildlife refuge? And also, given the Vice President's past ties to oil, what can you say to consumers that would allay any fears they might have that any deal that you come up with on energy, any national energy policy, may be more geared toward oil companies than to consumers?

The President. Well, Dick Cheney is a person who loves America and cares about the future of the country, just like I do. And he understands what I understand, that if we don't find more energy supplies to meet growing demand in places like California, the consumer is going to pay a dear price.

During the course of the campaign, we spent a lot of time talking about the need to develop a national energy policy. And that's exactly what we're going to do. There is a short-term issue of California, and we responded quickly to the Governor's request for a 2 week extension on some mandatory allocations of energy and gas. It's now up to the people of California, the elected officials of California, to correct a flawed law, and we're encouraged that they're doing so.

But there's a long-term issue as well, and that is, how do we find more energy supplies? How do we encourage conservation on the one hand and bring more energy into the marketplace? And a good place to look is going to be ANWR. And I campaigned hard on the notion of having an environmentally sensitive exploration to ANWR, and I think we can do so.

Faith-Based Initiative

Q. On your Faith-Based Initiative, could you address the concern that some people have that this is an erosion of church and state, and that this will somehow be an office of evangelicals in the White House?

The President. Right. I appreciate that question, because I, in the State of Texas, had heard a lot of discussion about a faith-based initiative eroding the important bridge between church and state. And I am convinced that our plan is constitutional, because we intend—we will not fund a church or a synagogue or a mosque or any religion but instead will be funding programs that affect people in a positive way.

The charitable choice provision that had been debated in the welfare reform package fully explored the constitutional questions involved with funding people and/or faith-based programs. And I am confident that our program not only is constitutional but, more importantly, our program is going to change America for the better, that we're going to help people, and we're going to help people help themselves, and we're going to rally the great compassion of America.

And I look forward to implementing this program. I look forward to working with Members of Congress to put the required package together.

Prescription Drug Legislation

Q. How do you respond to the Members of Congress who say they would rather see a universal, broad-based approach to Medicare reform rather than your drug plan first and a broader approach later?

The President. Well, if, in fact, what they're saying is that they plan on expediting a Medicare reform that will include prescription drugs for all seniors, then all of a sudden, I begin to say, "Well, gosh, that may make sense that you look at our proposal the way you do." If they're going to drag their feet, if the Members of the Congress on both sides of the aisle don't feel the same urgency that I feel and these two chairmen feel on Medicare reform, then I feel it's very important for us to have an Immediate Helping Hand. There are a lot of seniors who need help when it comes to prescription drugs.

President Clinton's Pardon of Marc Rich

Q. Why did you decide not to challenge the Clinton pardon, sir?

The President. Oh, on Marc Rich? First of all, I didn't agree with the decision. I would not have made that decision myself. But the ability for a President to make decisions is—a decision on pardons is inviolate, as far as I'm concerned. It's an important part of the office. I am mindful not only of preserving executive powers for myself but for predecessors as well. And that's why I made the decision.

Q. Are you troubled by the appearance, sir? Are you troubled by the appearance of that pardon, sir?

The President. I was troubled by the decision the President made. I would not have made the decision. I would not have made that decision. But nevertheless, he was the President. He had the right to do so, to make that decision, and he did. And I'm going to protect that privilege, not only for me but for future Presidents as well.

Q. Is it a quid pro quo——

The President. I don't know about that. It's going to be up for a good journalist to figure that out—like you, Roberts [John Roberts, CBS News].

Q. I'm just wondering, sir, if you're taking a look at the path that's been laid and said, "It walks like a duck"?

The President. It what—it walks like what? [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:04 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Representative William M. Thomas, chairman, House Committee on Ways and Means; Senator Charles Grassley, chairman, Senate Committee on Finance; Treasury Secretary-designate Paul H. O'Neill; and Gov. Gray Davis of California. The President also referred to ANWR, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Blueprint for Immediate Assistance To Help Medicare Beneficiaries Buy Prescription Drugs
January 29, 2001

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Enclosed please find the blueprint for my program to provide immediate assistance to help certain Medicare beneficiaries buy prescription drugs. I look forward to working with the Congress to enact these principles into law and to working together on comprehensive Medicare reform.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Bipartisan Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters
January 29, 2001

Legislative Agenda

The President. I'm continuing a series of meetings I'm going to have with Members of the Congress. I'm very serious about sitting down as often as possible with people from both parties to have frank discussions about issues that concern the country. I believe there is a very good opportunity for us to exceed expectations. Expectations are that nothing will get done. I'm confident that the people here in Washington and Members of the Senate don't agree with that.

We're going to talk about education, and we're going to talk about taxes. We'll talk about the patients' bill of rights—a variety of issues that are of concern, and what we call front burner issues, issues that should be making it through the Congress soon.

I want to thank the Members for coming. I'm honored that they would come down from the Hill to visit the Vice President and me. Thanks for coming.

Q. I have one question about——

The President. I'll catch you tomorrow. You missed your chance at the third press availability. [*Laughter*]

Q. When are you going to do your first news conference, Mr. President?

The President. These mini news conferences count. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:32 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Republican Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters
January 30, 2001

The President. It's an honor for the Vice President and the Secretary of Treasury and myself and OMB Director to welcome the leadership in the House and the Senate on the Republican side.

We've had a wide-ranging discussion, discussed tax relief and how we can pay down national debt and have tax relief, which all of us around this table firmly believe we can do. We also discussed the fact that there's a lot of Americans who have got a lot of consumer debt, and we must be mindful of those hard-working Americans. And part of the tax relief package is to allow people to better manage their own finances with their own money. We had a discussion about education.

We discussed, particularly the leader and I and Members of the Senate, discussed the need to get our nominees through the Senate. And I hope, in the spirit of bipartisanship, there will be no further delays on the confirmation process for John Ashcroft and other nominees of ours. I certainly appreciate how fast the Senate worked initially, but it's time for the delays to end. It's time for a vote on all our Cabinet officials.

This is—will be a series of conversations we'll have throughout my tenure, and I really enjoy this. It's been a good, frank discussion.

Interest Rates/Tax Relief Legislation

Q. Do you think the Fed should cut rates now, sort of stimulate the economy? And in the discussion of tax policy, there has been some disagreement between the White House and the Speaker and others over whether you should have one big package of tax cuts or to do it in pieces.

The President. First, Mr. Greenspan needs to make his decisions, independent of what I think. I learned a pretty good lesson during the transition, and that was I had commented out loud about one of the actions he took. That's the last time I'm going to comment about the actions that Mr. Greenspan takes. He's an independent voice and needs to be an independent voice.

Secondly, we did discuss the timing of the tax relief package and how best to move it through the House, where to originate. And as I told the Speaker and the chairman and the leadership, that we are interested in success, that the most important—most important—criterion for how the tax package is handled is whether or not it will succeed. And these are the Members who are going to have to work to get it out of the House, so we're listening to their strategy.

Q. What is the best timing for presenting the tax proposal, sir?

The President. Again, that's going to be up to the leadership. Obviously, it depends upon—it's the middle of our budget. As you noticed, the head of the budget committees are here; we're talking budget. Taxes must fit into a budget, which they will.

The answer to any of our initiatives, of course, is, as soon as possible. [*Laughter*]

Q. Mr. President?

The President. Yes, sir?

Q. Good morning, sir.

The President. How are you doing?

Q. Good. Thank you.

The President. I thought you had abandoned us for a while. [*Laughter*]

Diplomacy/Earthquake in India

Q. Are you happy with the progress you're making in reaching out to world leaders, or do you plan to change the pace of that at all?

The President. I've got a steady pace. I'm calling as I can. I talked to the Prime Minister of India today. It was a phone call that I was going to make, regardless of the natural disaster that took place there. Obviously, a lot of the conversation today was about the aid that our country is sending. A 747 from AID has landed this morning; another one is on its way. We're sending some military planes over, as well. I assured him that our Nation was deeply concerned for the citizenry that had lost their lives. It was not the appropriate time to discuss policy beyond that.

And I will be making other calls, touching base with world leaders. I'll do a lot of that, of course. Good diplomacy really depends upon good personal relations, whether or not we agree with each other on a lot of issues or not. And I'm going to continue the diplomacy that reaches out to people on a regular basis.

Attorney-General-Designate John Ashcroft

Q. On Senator Ashcroft, are you worried that there are going to be more—do you feel he's going to be confirmed, still?

The President. I do believe he's going to be confirmed. But one of my charges is to run the executive branch of Government. And it's important for our Cabinet officers to be confirmed so they can start doing their job of organizing their departments. Once we get our Cabinet officials through, I'm sure I'll be speaking to the Senate about moving the number twos and threes through, as well, so that we can take hold of this Government. And one of the things I'll be doing when our Cabinet meets is talking about the need for each Cabinet member to be fiscally sound with the taxpayers' money. It's hard to deliver that message when somebody hasn't been confirmed.

So I would just hope there are no further delays. There's been a lot of discussion, a lot of debate. There's been a lot of questionnaires presented and answers filled out. And it's now time for the vote, it seems like to me.

Q. Did you get the Vice President a birthday present?

The Vice President. Not yet. [*Laughter*]

The President. As a matter of fact—[*laughter*]—some used coffeecake, perhaps, Mr. Vice President? [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:35 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee of India. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at the Swearing-In Ceremony for Paul H. O'Neill as Secretary of the Treasury
January 30, 2001

The President. Well, I'm pleased to welcome Nancy O'Neill and the O'Neill family here. Thank you all for coming. It's an honor for both the Vice President and I to say some words about the Secretary of Treasury. With Paul over at the Treasury, he is literally a next-door neighbor. And I'm going to see a lot of him right here in this office. He'll be a valued adviser and a steady hand.

Secretary O'Neill has served in this office before, at the Office of Management and Budget. He understands the workings and responsibilities of the executive branch. More than that, he understands the private sector, where he and others like him have been driving our country's economic boom.

In a distinguished career, Paul has earned a reputation as a straight shooter and an innovator, and I'm proud to welcome him as the chief financial officer of this Nation.

Paul and I share a great goal: to make sure that all Americans can find high paying, high quality jobs. And we share a vision of how to get there. Our prosperity depends on free trade, less regulation, and America's strong place in our global economy. More than ever, American jobs depend on America's standing in the world. I value Paul's vast experience in the world economy. I value his background in employing American workers, and I value his steadiness, his conviction, and his authority.

We also share a belief that broad, responsible tax cuts are an important step we can take to regain the momentum of our economy. When we reduce the income tax burden, we must do so for everybody who pays taxes. When we have a Government surplus, we must prioritize and spend responsibly and return some of that surplus to the people who worked for it. Because our Government has a surplus does not mean that every American family has a surplus. In fact, many families are feeling squeezed by high energy prices and credit card debt. We need to give them their own money back, to help families manage their own account, to pay down their own personal debts. Our tax cut will give the biggest percentage reductions to people who struggle to get into the middle class and American families who struggle to stay there.

I believe in leaving more dollars with the people who earned them, and so does Secretary O'Neill. And I'm proud that those dollars will soon bear the signature of Secretary Paul O'Neill.

Congratulations, Mr. Secretary.

[*At this point, Secretary O'Neill made brief remarks.*]

The President. Mr. Secretary, thank you.

Why don't we have a family picture, too, if you'd like one. Come on up.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:06 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Nancy O'Neill, wife of Secretary O'Neill. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary O'Neill.

Remarks at the Fishing School
January 30, 2001

Thank you, Tom, very much for having us. And it's such an honor to have John DiIulio on my staff. For those of you who don't know John, he's a pioneer in working with Republicans and Democrats and people who really care about political parties to revitalize neighborhoods and places where hope may have been lost, by rallying faith-based organizations. And so, John, I'm so honored that you've sacrificed for the country. It's good to see Steve Goldsmith here, who is a partner as well.

A little over a week ago, a few miles from here, I was honored to be inaugurated your President. I'm here today to repeat the promise I made on the steps of the Capitol: I will work to build a single nation of justice and opportunity. I'm going to need some help to do that. And so I'm so honored four Members of the United States Congress are here: Senator Joe Lieberman from the great State of Connecticut; Senator Rick Santorum from Pennsylvania; Congressman Mark Souder of Indiana; Congressman Tony Hall of Ohio.

I'm also pleased that two members of my Cabinet came: one, Mel Martinez, my

Secretary of Housing and Urban Development; and finally, Rod Paige, a fellow Texan who is now the Secretary of Education.

The Fishing School obviously attracts people who seek excellence, and all of us up here, regardless of our political party, love to herald excellence. And we love to stand next to people who have got vision and good intentions and a good heart, and that's Tom Lewis. This little haven is a refuge from violence and addiction and abuse. Children find learning and care, but most important, they find something that we can never pass legislation to achieve, and that's love. They find love. They find an adult saying, "Somebody cares about you; somebody loves you; somebody wants to help you." Tom knows what we all know, that through loving children, you find deep fulfillment in your own heart. You can just see it on his face, and you can hear it in his voice.

As a candidate for President, I had the privilege of visiting a lot of churches and synagogues and charitable groups all across the country, groups that offer food and shelter, hope and dignity. I've seen how effective and committed these groups are at saving and changing lives. As President, I am resolved to put Government on your side, Tom, on the side of the committed and the caring and the compassionate.

There are so many people in need. The good news about America is, there are so many willing to serve. It's the great strength of our Nation. There's no limit to the talent and energy and compassion of this great land. But sometimes the need is too great, and the resources are too limited, and all of us, as private citizens and public officials, should help where we can.

Today I'm sending to Congress a set of ideas and proposals that mark a hopeful new direction for our Government. We will encourage community and faith-based programs without changing their mission. We will eliminate barriers to charitable works wherever they exist, and we will encourage charitable giving wherever we can.

I'm open to any good ideas that will come from the Congress. And I can assure you, these four good Members of Congress will have some good ideas. [*Laughter*] And they're probably not going to be afraid to tell me either. [*Laughter*] But here are some of my proposals.

I want to fully open up the Federal after-school program, called 21st Century Learning Centers, to all after-school programs, including faith-based groups. I propose to create a compassionate capital fund which will provide startup funds for promising new programs serving people in need. We'll make sure that funding is available to faith-based programs on an equal basis, with nonreligious alternatives. Government, of course, cannot fund and will not fund religious activities, but when people of faith provide social services, we will not discriminate against them. I propose to encourage mentoring programs for children of prisoners, as well as programs that, when possible, help to mend broken families.

The change we seek won't come all at once by any act of Congress or any Executive order signed by the President. Real change happens street by street, heart by heart, one soul, one conscience at a time. It happens in places like this one, the Fishing School. Yet, I hope that good policies can expand and multiply these efforts, uplifting lives all across America.

You know, those of us in public life oftentimes are honored to be able to see the best of America, to be able to find true strength, the true heart of the country. I believe the true heart of the country can be defined here at the Fishing School, a place, an idea started because somebody said, "What can I do? How can I hear the universal call to love a neighbor just like I'd like to be loved myself?" In this case, a person I call a social entrepreneur—and this is a country of social entrepreneurs.

And our job, regardless of our political party, is to recognize the strength of the country, to nourish it and feed it within the Constitution, within the bounds of the Constitution, and to herald success when we find it. And today all of us are honored to be here to herald success because we have found it right here.

God bless Tom. God bless your program.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:35 p.m. in the school's multipurpose room. In his remarks, he referred to Tom Lewis, founder, the Fishing School; John J. DiIulio, Jr., Director-designate, White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives; and Stephen Goldsmith, board member-designate, Corporation for National and Community Service.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Blueprint for the Program To Rally the Armies of Compassion
January 30, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

Enclosed please find the blueprint for my program to "Rally the Armies of Compassion." I look forward to working with the Congress to pass reforms to support the heroic works of faith-based and community groups across America.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,

January 30, 2001.

NOTE: This message was released on the White House Web site.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Bipartisan Congressional Leaders
January 31, 2001

Thank you all for coming. This is part of our effort to get to know each other. And if Thomas and Grassley keep coming up here, we're going to get to know them too good, aren't we? [*Laughter*]

I appreciate the Members of the Congress for being here this morning. Thank you all for coming. We're going to have a good, wide-ranging discussion, hopefully focused on tax relief. I'm pleased to see the CBO members. I think it helps further the case that there is enough money to pay down debt, to meet priorities, and to give some of the money back to the people who pay the bills—that's the taxpayers.

Pan Am 103 Trial Verdict

I also appreciate so very much the Scottish court has made a decision and convicted a member of the Libyan intelligence service for the 1988 bombing of Pan Am 103. I appreciate the work of the United States Government team which contributed to this guilty verdict.

Nothing can change the suffering and loss of this terrible act, but I hope the families do find some solace that a guilty verdict was rendered. I want to assure the families and victims the United States Government will continue to pressure Libya to accept responsibility for this act and to compensate the families.

Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:25 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Representative William M. Thomas, chairman, House Committee on Ways and Means; and Senator Charles Grassley, chairman, Senate Committee on Finance. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks in a Meeting With Catholic Charities Leaders
January 31, 2001

Listen, thank you all for coming. It has been my honor and that of members of my staff and of my Cabinet to have received leaders from the Catholic Church. During my travels around the country, I have been most impressed by not only the quality of leadership of the men and women who make up the great strength of the Catholic hierarchy but also the unwavering commitment to the poor and to the disadvantaged and to those who are unable to defend themselves.

America is a loving and compassionate country, and the leaders here reflect that compassion and that love. Here are folks that have heard the call from the Lord to love their neighbor and have fostered and nourished and led programs all intended to help people, to help people help themselves.

There is no way that Government can create love. Love comes from a higher calling. Love is inspirational. But what Government can do is fund and welcome programs whose sole intent is to change lives in a positive way.

For the last couple of days I've talked about my office's commitment to faith-based programs. I've talked about initiatives, particularly mentoring initiatives and after-school programs that will welcome faith-based programs. Today I do want to talk about one other component of making sure the initiative is full, and that is that we must reform the Tax Code, not in the way that I'm going to be talking to a lot of Members of Congress about but in an additional way, and that is to allow non-itemizers to deduct charitable giving off their income.

This is a reform of the Tax Code that will encourage giving from people who have received no incentive to do so. There is an independent study out today that will show that giving in America will increase significantly when Congress passes this reform and I have the opportunity to sign it.

Our mission in the White House is to say, we welcome you. We welcome your love. We welcome your finances. We welcome your compassion. And to those heroes who live in the neighborhoods all around America, who are literally transforming our country in a positive way, we say, thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

I'm so honored the leadership came, many of whom I have seen before. I've now met new friends, and we welcome you here to Washington, DC. Thank you for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:55 p.m. in the Indian Treaty Room at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building.

Remarks Prior to a Cabinet Meeting and an Exchange With Reporters
January 31, 2001

The President. Thank you all for coming. In my first Cabinet meeting, we're going to discuss a variety of topics today. I'm going to remind all of us, it's an honor to serve the country. I expect only one standard, and that's the highest of ethical standards. We're putting together a great team to serve America. That's what we're here for.

I am going to talk a little bit about reminding people that a dollar spent is a tax—is somebody's money and that we expect there to be lean budgets, good stewards of the people's money.

We'll hear from some of the Cabinet officers about what may be going on. I suspect the Energy Secretary may want to brief us. I think the Secretary of Treasury will give us an update on what's going on, the economy and tax relief.

I want to assure Americans that they're going to be as proud of this Cabinet as I am. This is a wonderful group of men and women who have agreed to serve their country, for which I'm grateful.

I'll be glad to answer a few questions.

Tax Relief Legislation

Q. Mr. President, are you beginning to think that Congress might act more quickly on your tax cuts if you break it up into pieces and seek across-the-board tax cut first?

The President. I told the Speaker and anybody else who will listen on the House side, where the legislation must begin, that we're interested in the results. If that's what it takes to get the bill through, we'll be willing to listen. This is an administration that's mindful of the difference between the legislative branch and the executive branch. We will make suggestions if asked. If the Speaker and Chairman Thomas and others believe that the best way to get our plan in place that will help bolster the economy that we believe needs bolstering, we'll listen and work with them.

Pan Am 103 Verdict

Q. Mr. President, does the verdict in the Pan Am bombing case—should it leave any doubt that Libya was behind the bombing of Pan Am 103 as an act of state?

The President. This was a high official. We've made it very clear that this administration is going to hold the Libyans accountable. We expect them to pay reparations. The Secretary of State is in complete agreement.

Q. If they pay reparations——

The President. Let's see if they do.

Q. The Government of Tripoli just announced as we were coming in here that they will accept no responsibility for what happened. What happens now from the U.S. side?

The President. We'll develop a plan.

Secretary of State Colin L. Powell

Q. Welcome back, Mr. Powell.

The President. He looks pretty good here, doesn't he? [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:28 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Representative William M. Thomas, chairman, House Committee on Ways and Means. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With the Congressional Black Caucus
January 31, 2001

The President. I want to thank Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson from Dallas, Texas, and you all for coming. I appreciate—Madam Chairman. I look forward to a good dialog on subjects that are on the Members' minds and on my mind, as well.

I think we'll have a good discussion about public education. While there may be some discussion about details, all of us surely believe the great hope for this country is to make sure every child—I mean every child—is educated. I look forward to sharing with the Members who don't know me well some of my experiences as the Governor of the State of Texas and what I've tried to do to fulfill that promise and fulfill that pledge.

This will be the beginning of, hopefully, a lot of meetings. I hope you come back, and I'll certainly be inviting. But thanks for coming. It's an important part of my job—is to talk to everybody who is in the legislative body. I will remind you all, I understand the difference between the executive branch and the legislative branch. I only get to suggest. You all pass the laws. And that's what we're here to work——

Representative Cynthia A. McKinney. That's right. [*Laughter*]

The President. I understand that well. But thank you all for coming. It's an honor for you to be here.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:32 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the United States Air Force Operating Location Near Groom Lake, Nevada
January 31, 2001

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with section 6001(a) of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) (the "Act"), as amended, 42 U.S.C. 6961(a), notification is hereby given that on September 19, 2000, President Clinton issued Presidential Determination 2000–30 (copy attached) and thereby exercised his authority to grant certain exemptions under section 6001(a) of the Act.

Presidential Determination 2000–30 exempted the United States Air Force's operating location near Groom Lake, Nevada, from any Federal, State, interstate, or local hazardous or solid waste laws that would require the disclosure of classified information concerning that operating location to unauthorized persons. Information concerning activities at the operating location near Groom Lake has been properly determined to be classified and its disclosure would be harmful to national security. Continued protection of this information is, therefore, in the paramount interest of the United States.

The determination was not intended to imply that, in the absence of a Presidential exemption, RCRA or any other provision of law permits or requires the disclosure of classified information to unauthorized persons. The determination also was not intended to limit the applicability or enforcement of any requirement of law applicable to the Air Force's operating location near Groom Lake except those provisions,

if any, that would require the disclosure of classified information.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 1.

Remarks at the National Prayer Breakfast
February 1, 2001

Well, thank you all very much for that warm welcome. Laura and I are honored to be here this morning. I did a pretty good job when it came to picking my wife, by the way. She's going to be a fabulous First Lady.

Mr. Vice President, it's good to see you; of course, your wife, Lynne. And I want to thank the members of my Cabinet who are here.

I appreciate you, Senator Frist, for your commitment and strong comments. And Zach, thanks for your introduction. And thank you both for organizing this important event. I want to thank the Members of the House and the Senate who are here.

I appreciate the number of foreign dignitaries who are here. It just goes to show that faith crosses every border and touches every heart in every nation.

Every President since the first one I can remember, Dwight Eisenhower, has taken part in this great tradition. It's a privilege for me to speak where they have spoken and to pray where they have prayed. All Presidents of the United States have come to the National Prayer Breakfast, regardless of their religious views. No matter what our background, in prayer we share something universal, a desire to speak and listen to our Maker and to know His plan for our lives.

America's Constitution forbids a religious test for office, and that's the way it should be. An American President serves people of every faith and serves some of no faith at all. Yet, I have found my faith helps me in the service to people. Faith teaches humility—as Laura would say, I could use a dose occasionally—[*laughter*]—a recognition that we are small in God's universe, yet precious in His sight. It has sustained me in moments of success and in moments of disappointment. Without it I would be a different person, and without it I doubt I'd be here today.

There are many experiences of faith in this room. But most of us share a belief that we are loved and called to love, that our choices matter now and forever, that there are purposes deeper than ambition and hopes greater than success. These beliefs shape our lives and help sustain the life of our Nation. Men and women can be good without faith, but faith is a force of goodness. Men and women can be compassionate without faith, but faith often inspires compassion. Human beings can love without faith, but faith is a great teacher of love.

Our country, from its beginnings, has recognized the contribution of faith. We do not impose any religion; we welcome all religions. We do not prescribe any prayer; we welcome all prayers. This is the tradition of our Nation, and it will be the standard of my administration. We will respect every creed. We will honor the diversity of our country and the deep convictions of our people.

There's a good reason why many in our Nation embrace the faith tradition.

Throughout our history, people of faith have often been our Nation's voice of conscience. The foes of slavery could appeal to the standard that all are created equal in the sight of our Lord. The civil rights movement had the same conviction on its side, that men and women bearing God's image should not be exploited and set aside and treated as insignificant. The same impulse, over the years, has reformed prisons and mental institutions, hospitals, hospices, and homeless shelters.

The Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., said this: "The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state but rather the conscience of the state." As in his case, that sometimes means defying the times, challenging old ways and old assumptions. This influence has made our Nation more just and generous and decent. And our Nation has need of that today.

Faith remains important to the compassion of our Nation. Millions of Americans serve their neighbor because they love their God. Their lives are characterized by kindness and patience and service to others. They do for others what no government really can ever do—no government program can really ever do: They provide love for another human being; they provide hope even when hope comes hard.

In my second week in office, we have set out to promote the work of community and faith-based charities. We want to encourage the inspired, to help the helper. Government cannot be replaced by charities, but it can welcome them as partners instead of resenting them as rivals.

My administration will put the Federal Government squarely on the side of America's armies of compassion. Our plan will not favor religious institutions over nonreligious institutions. As President, I'm interested in what is constitutional, and I'm interested in what works. The days of discriminating against religious institutions simply because they are religious must come to an end.

Faith is also important to the civility of our country. It teaches us not merely to tolerate one another but to respect one another, to show a regard for different views, and the courtesy to listen. This is essential to democracy. It is also the proper way to treat human beings created in the divine image.

We will have our disagreements. Civility does not require us to abandon deeply held beliefs. Civility does not demand casual creeds and colorless convictions. Americans have always believed that civility and firm resolve could live easily with one another. But civility does mean that our public debate ought to be free from bitterness and anger and rancor and ill will. We have an obligation to make our case, not to demonize our opponents. As the Book of James reminds us, fresh water and salt water cannot flow from the same spring.

I am under no illusion that civility will triumph in this city all at once. [*Laughter*] Old habits die hard, and sometimes they never die at all. I can only pledge to you this, that I will do my very best to promote civility and ask for the same in return.

These are some of the crucial contributions of faith to our Nation: justice and compassion and a civil and generous society. I thank you all here for displaying these values and defending them here in America and across the world. You strengthen the ties of friendship and the ties of nations, and I deeply appreciate your work.

I believe in the power of prayer. It's been said, "I would rather stand against the cannons of the wicked than against the prayers of the righteous." The prayers of a friend are one of life's most gracious gifts. My family and I are blessed by the prayers of countless Americans. Over the last several months, Laura and I have been touched by the number of people who come up and say, "We pray for you"—such comforting words. I hope Americans will continue to pray that everyone in my

administration finds wisdom and always remembers the common good.

When President Harry Truman took office in 1945, he said this: "At this moment, I have in my heart a prayer. I ask only to be a good and faithful servant of my Lord and my people." This has been the prayer of many Presidents, and it is mine today.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:10 a.m. in the International Ballroom at the Washington Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Zach Wamp.

Remarks Announcing the New Freedom Initiative
February 1, 2001

Steven, you were brilliant in your introduction. Little did we know—we kind of thought we'd be sitting here during the California race, didn't we? But here we are, and thank you so much for being here.

I'm so honored that you all are here. I appreciate the folks who served on my coalition for people with disabilities. There's one hero here that I got to know during the campaign. His name is Jim Mullen. Jim is from Chicago. He's a police officer, wounded in the course of duty, who is a courageous, fine American. And Jim, thank you so very much for coming today.

I'm glad the First Lady is here. It's an unusual job where all you've got to do is walk down from your living room to come to work. [*Laughter*] I'm really proud of Laura.

It's good to see Members of the Congress who are here. Thank you all for coming as well. I'm especially pleased that people from all around the country have taken time to help kick off this important initiative.

One of the things I enjoy most about my new job is the walk I get to take every single morning up the Colonnade from the Residence to the Oval Office. I say "up," because the path rises just slightly. It's been that way since they took out the steps so that Franklin Roosevelt could make it to his place of work.

This house is among the first places in America to accommodate people with disabilities. And we have come a long way since the days when only a President could hope for that consideration. We are more mindful now of the hardships that come with disability, more generous in responding to the needs of our citizens, more grateful for the contributions you make to our society. Old misconceptions about physical and mental disability are being discredited. Old barriers are falling away. Our task is now clear: We must speed up the day when the last barrier has been removed to full and independent lives for every American, with or without disability.

I am proud that the last great reform in this cause, the Americans with Disability Act, bears the signature of my dad. I see many in this audience who helped him get this important legislation through Congress, and I want to thank you for coming. Because of that law, millions of Americans can now compete for jobs once denied them, enter buildings once closed to them, travel in buses and trains once unequipped for them. For those who have hearing or visual impairments, for those who use walkers and wheelchairs or have mental retardation and mental illnesses, your own country now seems a more welcoming place as a result of that law. Eleven years after the ADA, we are a better country for it.

But there is more to do, and today I propose we move forward. This morning I sent to Congress a set of proposals called the New Freedom Initiative. It is an important step in ensuring that all Americans with disabilities, whether young or old, can participate more fully in the life of their communities and of our country. Wherever a door is closed to anyone because of a disability, we must work to open it. Wherever any job or home or means of transportation is unfairly denied because of a disability, we must work to change it. Wherever any barrier stands between you and the full rights and dignity of citizenship, we must work to remove it, in the name of simple decency and simple justice.

Often, as you know, such barriers are unintentional. One is the high cost of assistive technologies. For many people with disabilities, new technologies are helping to defeat dependence and frustration and isolation: text telephones for those with hearing impairments; computer monitors with Braille displays for those with visual impairments; infrared pointers for people who cannot use their hands, allowing them to operate computers by pointing at functions on the monitor or the keyboard; lighter wheelchairs; lighter artificial limbs. These modern wonders make the world more accessible; yet, they are often inaccessible to people who need but cannot afford them. These technologies were once beyond the dreams of Americans with disabilities. Today, they're only beyond their means, and we can help.

In our New Freedom Initiative, we're asking Congress to significantly increase Federal funding for low-interest loans so that more Americans with disabilities can purchase assistive technology. And to ensure that even better technologies are available in the future, we're asking Congress to increase Federal investment in assistive technology research and development.

My administration will also work with businesses to bring more assistive technologies to the marketplace. Once available, these technologies will allow Americans with disabilities to use more of their own gifts, make more of their own choices, and lead lives of greater independence.

Many Americans with disabilities work or would like to have more freedom to do so. And you know that the greatest challenges are often not in the job itself but in the distance between your job and your home. For some people with disabilities, this challenge means no job at all, no opportunity to work and to contribute and to use their talents. This is changing as more Americans work at home. Yet here, too, the cost of computers and telecommuting are sometimes beyond the means of those with disabilities, and we can help.

In our New Freedom Initiative, we are asking Congress to create a fund to help people with disabilities to buy the equipment they need to telecommute. We will provide tax incentives to encourage employers to provide such equipment. And we will protect home offices from needless OSHA regulations. Some 40 million Americans today work out of their homes. For most, it is a convenience. For workers with disabilities, it is a revolution. And we want as many Americans as possible to share in this revolution of independence.

Our plans also include transportation solutions for people with disabilities. Specifically, we're asking Congress to fund pilot programs for innovative transportation plans that serve people with disabilities. And we'll provide Federal matching grants to community groups to provide alternative methods of transportation.

There are several additional proposals in this package, but let me just mention one more. We will provide additional funding each year to help churches, synagogues, mosques, and other civic groups become more fully accessible to all Americans. In many houses of worship and civic centers, intentions are good, but resources are scarce. We can help make these community places open to all.

I've often talked about the goal of a welcoming society, a nation where no one is dismissed or forgotten. Our progress toward that goal is really the great American story. It is a story of inclusion and protection extending across our history to more and more Americans. And that story's not over. There is still work to do. We must all do our duty and play our part. And I hope today we have made a good beginning.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:10 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Steven J. Tingus, resource development director, California Foundation for Independent Living Centers, who introduced the President.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Blueprint for the New Freedom Initiative
February 1, 2001

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Enclosed please find the blueprint for my "New Freedom Initiative" to increase investment in and access to assistive technologies and a quality education, and help integrate Americans with disabilities into the workforce and into community life. I look forward to working with the Congress to ensure that these proposals are enacted into law and to working together to ensure that every American with a disability has access to the American dream.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Final Report on the National Emergency With Respect to the Lapse of the Export Administration Act of 1979
February 1, 2001

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

As required by section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1703(c)) and section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1641(c)), I transmit herewith the final report on the national emergency declared by Executive Order 12924 of August 19, 1994, to deal with the threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States caused by the lapse of the Export Administration Act of 1979.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate. The related Executive order of April 4 on termination of emergency authority for certain export controls is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the Republican Congressional Retreat in Williamsburg, Virginia
February 2, 2001

Thank you all very much. I like to give short speeches, and I'm always on time. [*Laughter*] But evidently, I didn't get the dress code. [*Laughter*]

I really appreciate you, Speaker. Thanks for your friendship; thanks for your leadership. These are two really good men. And I want to thank you, J.C., and Rick as well, for your—pretty darn eloquent guy for being from Oklahoma. [*Laughter*] He can tell it. I appreciate you. Thank you very much. I'm looking forward to welcoming the University of Oklahoma football team to the White House.

I appreciate the chairman of the Republican Party being here. I chose a fellow Governor—or I asked a fellow Governor to serve, and he's a good one. He's a strong leader. He's done a fabulous job for the Commonwealth of Virginia, and I appreciate you being here, Jim. Thank you very much.

I'm glad you get to see the Secretary of the Treasury, who's smart and capable. He's surrounded by Senator Grassley and Congressman Thomas; good work. [*Laughter*] It didn't take you long to transition from the private sector. And Condi is here, Condi Rice; a capable Chief of Staff, Andy Card; Nick Calio, who's going to really head up our congressional affairs. The reason I bring these people up is that they're here to serve America. They're here to work with you to make our jobs easier. And I've assembled one of the finest staffs any President has ever done in the White House.

I'm making my rounds to the various caucuses. Senator Daschle invited me over this morning to the Library of Congress, and I was so honored he would, and it gave me a chance to come. Many Members of the Senate there had never seen me in person and had never had a chance to visit. And we had a very good discussion, and I was grateful for his introduction. I'm going on to Pennsylvania Sunday afternoon, as well, thanks to the kind invitation of Congressman Gephardt.

And I want to go around and say a couple of things as clearly as I can. First, here, I want to thank all the Members who are here who I got to campaign with. We had a lot of fun. It was tiring at times, but I really, really appreciated the Senators and House Members for joining me and Laura on the campaign trail. It really made it a lot easier to understand your districts, as well as to put up with all the long hours on the campaign trail. So thanks from the bottom of my heart for your sacrifices.

It also gives me a chance to say how deadly earnest I am about using my position as your President to change the tone in the Nation's Capital, to say to America that we'll have our disagreements, we'll fight over principle, and we'll argue over detail, but we'll do so in a way that respects one another. I think it's so important for us as leaders, as people who have been given positions of responsibility, to understand that the way the process is conducted can set a good or bad tone for America. I'm committed to setting a positive tone for the country, and I know you'll join me.

You're not going to agree with everything I say. I probably won't agree with everything you say. But I'll listen, and I'll respect your opinion. I'll try to understand why the position you've taken. I'll try and understand why you don't do everything I tell you to do. [*Laughter*] But I'll do so in a way that tries to figure out where the other person comes from. I think that's an important part of the Washington experience.

I'm absolutely convinced that we can change Washington for the better. I believe we can have the dialog so necessary that will inspire some youngster who's looking

at Washington to say, "I think I want to serve my country. I think I want to maybe go to the United States Senate or the United States House." We have that responsibility to our citizens. And I pledge to you that these first 14 days in office, or near 14 days in office—the tone set in the first 14 days will be a consistent tone for however long I happen to be fortunate enough to be your President. This is a message I want to say to all elected officials.

I love meeting with the Members. For those of you who have been to our office, thanks for coming. For those of you that have not been to our office yet, you're coming. Just don't take any silverware. [*Laughter*] When you come, I look forward to hearing from you. I look forward to having a frank discussion. I look forward to hearing what's on your mind. I don't want you to—I'm sure you won't be, but don't be looking around at the furnishings and say, "Gosh, oh, the meeting ended, and I didn't say anything." We expect to hear from you, and that's the best way to get things done, is to have a good, honest discussion.

I also want to remind members of both parties that I am able to stand before you as the President because of an agenda that I ran on. I believe the fact that I took specific stands on important issues is the reason I was able to win. The fact that I took on the Social Security issue in as clear language as I could be, with innovative thinking, I believe, was part of the reasons why people came our way.

I'm going to take that same positions I took on Social Security and other issues, and try to get them on the floor of the House and the Senate and get something done. It's a positive agenda. It's one that I believe, when we apply our principles to it, will make a huge difference for America. The agenda is going to require a lot of patience and a lot of time and a lot of work. But I want you to know, this is not a lot of items. I believe I've got a limited amount of capital, and I'm going to spend it wisely and spend it in a focused way.

One item is Social Security; another is Medicare reform. We have a fantastic opportunity to seize the initiative to make sure that, working with people like Chairman Thomas, to make sure that the Medicare system works. Prescription drugs need to be an integral part of a Medicare delivery system. It will be a proud moment for all of us, Republicans and Democrats, to say we came together to modernize Medicare so that the seniors can retire in dignity.

I see the respective chairmen of the committees dealing with our military. I commit to you that our mission is going to be to make sure our military is strong and capable. But it first requires the administration to act. One, is to clarify the mission, to make it clear to those who wear our uniform that the mission is to be prepared and ready to fight and win war and, therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place.

But we have an obligation to the Members of Congress to present a strategic vision about what the military ought to look like. We've got an unbelievable opportunity, as we go into the 21st century, to refashion how war is fought and won and, therefore, how the peace is kept. It's a remarkable moment. But it's incumbent upon those of us in the executive branch, Secretary Rumsfeld and our policy team, to present to you a blueprint about what the military ought to look like and where the priorities ought to be. You may like it; you may not like it. But before we—good appropriations will really only occur if there is a strategic vision. And we're the appropriate people to present the strategic vision. So Secretary Rumsfeld is working on that.

We've had a lot of talk—early talk about education. I want to thank you all for your respective chairmen coming over and talking about education. This is not a Republican issue or a Democrat issue. This is

of national concern, to make sure our public schools function. And we can apply some principles that I think we all agree with, which is high standards, expecting the best for every child, local control of schools, trusting local people to run the schools, and strong accountability systems but, as well, insist that there be results.

Guess what happens in systems when you don't measure? Inner-city schools just get shuffled through the school systems. Or in my case, in my State, sometimes children whose parents didn't speak English as a first language just got moved through. Because you know why? We didn't know. And they come out at the end, and somebody says, "Oh, you can't read like you're supposed to." That's because we didn't have the courage to insist upon measurement; we didn't have the courage to insist upon results. In order to make sure every child is educated—I mean every child—and no child is left behind, we've got to adopt a system that has high standards, local control of schools, and the willingness to hold people accountable for results, and an accountability system for which there is a consequence if there is success and there is a consequence if there is failure.

Many Members, Republican and Democrat alike, have said, "Are you going to give us a budget?" I said, "Of course—just hope you don't kill it the minute it arrives." It is our responsibility to do so and, working with the Speaker and the leader, to make sure it's there on a timely basis. But we'll have a budget. It's a budget that will set aside Social Security for one thing—payroll taxes for Social Security and only Social Security. It's a budget that pays down national debt. It's a budget that sets spending priorities. But it's also a budget that recognizes we must provide tax relief to the people who pay the bills. I feel strongly about this issue. And of course I hope you join me.

It is so important for us to understand some facts. One, the economy is slowing down. And it's important for us to combine good monetary policy with good fiscal policy. And good fiscal policy is a sound budget, coupled with giving people some of their own money back, to serve as a second wind to an economy. I come from the school of thought that by cutting marginal rates for everybody who pays taxes is a good way to help ease the pain of what may be an economic slowdown. I'm going to make that case over and over and over again until we get a bill through.

It's important for us not to let the tax relief debate fall into a class warfare debate. It seems like, to me, the fair way to do things is if people pay taxes, they ought to get tax relief. But I want to assure you that inherent in our plan is an understanding of how unfair the tax system is. It's unfair to people at the bottom end of the economic ladder.

If you're a single—I did one of these radio addresses for tomorrow, and I talked about the single mom who is working hard to get ahead. She's making $22,000 a year. Many of you heard—you probably heard me use this example in the campaign. But I want to share it with you again, because it's an inherent part of our plan. For every dollar she earns, because of the earned-income tax phase-out and because she gets into the 15 percent bracket and because she pays payroll taxes, she pays a higher rate on the extra dollar earned than someone who is making $200,000 a year. That's today's Tax Code.

And so part of our plan is not only to serve as an insurance policy against a severe economic downturn or a second wind for economic recovery, however you want to put it, but part of our vision addresses unfairness in the code by recognizing there are people struggling to get in the middle class. This country must understand that by making the code more simple, by dropping the bottom rate from 15 to 10 percent and increasing the child credit, we make that middle class, that dream of ownership so much more accessible, and that's what

we ought to be representing in the great land called America.

There is a lot of talk about debt, and we need to retire debt at the Federal level. Just remember, lockboxing Social Security, a payroll tax is a pretty darn good step to relieving debt. But there will be a glide path for debt repayment in our budget.

But during this debate, I want you all to remember that there is a huge consumer debt burdening many people working for a living in America, that there are 61 million Americans, I've been told, that have $10,000 or more of consumer debt. Now, think about that. These are people working hard to get ahead. They've got a pretty high debt load. And all of a sudden, energy prices start moving up on them. And the combination of the two worries me, and I hope it worries Members of Congress, regardless of their party.

So tax relief is important to help working people manage their own accounts, manage their own personal business. And they say, "Well, that's not much money." Well, if you're a family of four making $50,000 a year, under my plan, your taxes go from $4,000 to $2,000. That's $2,000 extra dollars. That's a lot for somebody struggling. That's a lot for somebody who is on the margin, and we must hear those voices on the margin. So tax relief is not only good economic policy; it's good people policy.

We can talk about marginal rates. We also need to talk about the death tax and the marriage penalty, two important ingredients about making sure the code is more fair and more responsive to the needs of working Americans. And that's my agenda.

I'm going to be asked to comment on a lot of issues. I'm confident about that. And I'm sure I'll have an opinion. But when it comes to spending capital and staying focused, that's where this administration is going to be.

And I look forward to working with you. I look forward to working with you to get things done for the people. I can't think of a better cause then the people of America. J.C. hit it right, this is a fabulous land, because the people are so great.

I think one of the most important initiatives that thus far we've discussed, in the short time I've been here, is the Faith-Based Initiative. I want to make it clear to you, we understand the Constitution. But I also want to make it clear that faith-based programs in many neighborhoods are really the solution to making sure we have a welcoming society.

My hope of hopes is that when it's all done, somebody will say, "Well, you know, President George W. Bush came"—"Number 43," by the way, as opposed to "Number 41"—[*laughter*]—but "he came, along with his dad, and understood the office, helped change the tone, helped effect a cultural change that was a welcoming change, and welcomed people into America that didn't pit one group of people against another but that helped people understand the greatness of America should apply to everybody, that the public policies that we passed together enforced that dream and vision, that this is the greatest country on the face of the Earth because of its people, because of our great people."

We have an obligation to the people of America to set a good tone, a good example, an example of the spirit of what's possible. I'm confident it can happen. And it's such a huge honor—huge honor—to play an important part.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:55 p.m. in the James River Grand Ballroom at the Kingsmill Resort. In his remarks, he referred to Representative J.C. Watts; Senator Rick Santorum; Gov. James S. Gilmore III of Virginia, chairman, Republican Party; Representative William M. Thomas, chairman, House Committee on Ways and Means; and Senator Charles Grassley, chairman, Senate Committee on Finance.

The President's Radio Address
February 3, 2001

Good morning. This coming week I will send to Congress my tax relief plan. It is broad and responsible. It will help our economy, and it is the right thing to do.

Today, many Americans are feeling squeezed. They work 40, 50, 60 hours a week and still have trouble paying the electric bill and the grocery bill at the same time. At the end of a long week, they collect their paycheck, and what the Federal Government takes is often unfair.

Picture a diner in one of our cities. At the table is a lawyer with two children. She earns $250,000 a year. Carrying her coffee and toast is a waitress who has two children of her own. She earns $25,000 a year. If both the lawyer and the waitress get a raise, it is the waitress who winds up paying a higher marginal tax rate. She will give back almost half of every extra dollar she earns to the Government.

Both of these women, the lawyer and the waitress, deserve a tax cut. Under my plan, both of these women and all Americans who pay taxes will get one. For the waitress, our plan will wipe out her income tax bill entirely.

My plan does some important things for America. It reduces taxes for everyone who pays taxes. It lowers the lowest income tax rate from 15 percent to 10 percent. It cuts the highest rate to 33 percent, because I believe no one should pay more than a third of their income to the Federal Government. The average family of four will get about $1,600 of their own money returned back to them.

There's a lot of talk in Washington about paying down the national debt, and that's good, and that's important. And my budget will do that. But American families have debts to pay, as well. A tax cut now will stimulate our economy and create jobs.

The economic news these days is troubling—rising energy prices, layoffs, falling consumer confidence. This is not a time for Government to be taking more money than it needs away from the people who buy goods and create jobs.

My plan will keep all Social Security money in the Social Security System, where it belongs. We will eliminate the death tax, saving family farms and family-owned businesses. We'll reduce the maximum rate on small-business income to 33 percent, so they can help create the jobs we need. Above all, my plan unlocks the door to the middle class for millions of hard-working Americans.

The country has prospered mightily over the past 20 years. But a lot of people feel as if they have been looking through the window at somebody else's party. It is time to fling those doors and windows open and invite everybody in. It is time to reward the work of people trying to enter the middle class and put some more money in their pockets at a time when they need it.

My tax reduction plan does all these things, and I hope you'll support it.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 8:30 a.m. on February 2 in the Oval Office at the White House, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on February 3. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 2 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks Announcing the Tax Relief Plan and an Exchange With Reporters
February 5, 2001

The President. Good morning. I want to thank the families for being my guests here at the White House. I'm honored to host the Peterson family, the Claytor family, and the Gordon family, to talk about the economic challenges they face. Their circumstances are different, but I strongly believe they deserve to keep more of their own money, and so does every family in America, deserve to keep their own money.

And we're talking to these families here—I think they like the idea. Despite the prosperity of the past two decades, many American families feel squeezed. They sometimes carry a lot of consumer debt. In 1998 the average family credit card debt was more than $4,000. At the same time, every American family is facing higher energy costs.

Under the plan I'll be sending to Congress later this week, every American who pays income taxes will get tax relief. And the average relief for a family of four with two children will be $1,600. This is real and practical help, when at this time many Americans need it. Sixteen hundred dollars will pay the average mortgage for a month. Sixteen hundred dollars will pay for a year's tuition at a community college. Sixteen hundred dollars will pay the average gasoline costs for two cars for a year. And $1,600 will buy the average California family 24 months' worth of electric power.

My plan addresses the struggles of American families and respects their judgment. It doesn't tell families how to spend their money. It doesn't single out some Americans for relief, while leaving others out. It's tax relief for everybody who pays taxes. That's what the times and basic fairness demand.

Here's how it will work. Under the existing law, Americans are grouped in five income tax brackets: 15 percent, 28 percent, 31 percent, 36 percent, and nearly 40 percent. My plan would reduce that to four lower brackets: 10 percent, 15 percent, 25 percent, and 33 percent. In other words, we'd begin the simplification of the code.

Each of the families with me today would benefit from these lower taxes. Most families will get a $1,000-per-child tax credit. Everybody who pays income taxes will get some relief, but the biggest percentage cuts will go to the families who need it most. The Peterson family, for example, will get a 100 percent cut in their income taxes, saving almost $1,100 a year. Paul and Debbie and their two beautiful girls would appreciate that.

All of the income tax rates should be cut. Most families over a lifetime will move through a couple of different tax brackets. Many families will move through all four as they move up the ladder of economic success and then back down as they retire and leave the workforce. Our Tax Code should not punish success at any stage of life. With the top Federal income tax rate at almost 40 percent and with State income taxes on top of that, people can sometimes feel like the junior partner in their own lives. That's why we set the top rate at 33 percent. I believe it's an important principle that no American should pay more than a third of his or her income to the Federal Government in Federal taxes.

And Government shouldn't block the way into the middle class for hard-working people who are trying to get there. The single mother earning $25,000 a year manages to earn $1,000 by getting a promotion; the Federal Government takes about half of it away from her. That's a higher marginal tax rate than a lawyer earning $250,000. That's not right, and that's wrong. And my plan addresses this inequity.

This is my approach: tax relief for everybody, in every bracket, averaging $1,600

per family, while still reducing our national debt and funding important priorities.

I'm asking all Americans to examine this plan, and I'm asking for your support. The Constitution charges the Congress with the responsibility to write our tax laws, and I respect that responsibility. But it is my obligation to lead, and that's what I'm going to do. My plan is good for the long-term health of our economy. It is good for the businesses that create jobs. It is good for America and for the American families that make our country so unique and strong.

Thank you for coming.

Q. Mr. President, do you think the tax cut should be retroactive to the first of the year?

The President. A lot of Members of Congress have talked to me about that. And I do. And we look forward to working with Congress to expedite money into the pockets of the American people. I strongly believe that a tax relief plan is an important part of helping our country's economy recover. And I think expediting money into people's pockets is going to be a key ingredient. I look forward to working with Congress, Members of both parties, to accommodate the budgetary needs and, at the same time, help get money into people's pockets quicker.

Q. Mr. President, Democrats in Congress think that this plan, as it's structured now, is weighted too heavily to the higher income brackets. Are you willing to work with them to perhaps change the ratios a little bit, if that's what it takes to get their support?

The President. I believe the plan, strongly believe the plan that I have submitted is structured the right way. I've heard all the talk about class warfare and this only benefiting the rich. I think when people take a good, hard look at the rate reduction and who benefits and the fact that our plan erases inequities in the Tax Code or eases inequities in the Tax Code and that the biggest—the bottom end of the economic ladder receives the biggest percentage cuts, people will come to realize it. I think it's important to cut all tax rates.

Yes.

Q. Mr. President, in addition to making the tax cut retroactive, your economic adviser said yesterday you would also support bringing more of the benefits forward to the first year of the plan. Is that correct?

The President. What I'm referring to is enhancing the cashflow of the taxpayer as quickly as possible, and that's what we're going to work on. I also saw some comments which I thought made a lot of sense, that some in Congress view this as an opportunity to load up the tax relief plan with their own vision of tax relief. I want the Members of Congress and the American people to hear loud and clear: This is the right size plan; it is the right approach; and I'm going to defend it mightily.

Q. There is no family, sir, representing the last tax bracket, the bracket that would get the highest dollar return. Why is that?

The President. Well, I beg your pardon, I'm representing—[*laughter*]—I got a little pay raise coming to Washington from Austin. I'll be in the top bracket. [*Laughter*]

Former President Clinton

Q. Mr. President, on another note, sir, it appears the Clintons may have taken some gifts that were actually given to the White House. Do you feel that they should return any of these gifts?

The President. It's important for all the facts to be laid out on the table, and I'm confident that the President—the former President and First Lady will make the right decision.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:18 a.m. in the Diplomatic Room at the White House.

Remarks at the Swearing-In Ceremony for Donald L. Evans as Secretary of Commerce
February 5, 2001

Thank you, Mr. Vice President. It's great to be here with Members of the Congress. Thank you all for coming. Senator, thank you, sir. Two members of the Texas delegation are here, and we appreciate it very much for coming.

I want to thank you all for giving the Vice President and me a chance to come and see the swearing in of a really good man—who married, by the way, a person with whom I went to first through seventh grade with at Sam Houston Elementary School in Midland, Texas, and San Jacinto Junior High. And when we were on safety patrol, little did she ever imagine I'd be President. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank all the good folks who work in this Department. You don't know Don yet, but you're going to love him like I do. I also want to thank you for your service to the country. I appreciate your hard work on behalf of America and the American citizens.

Don has taken an oath to serve this country, and I know he'll be true to that oath in every way, because in 25 years, I have never known him to break his word or forget a promise. Don's the kind of man you can trust without reservation and turn to without hesitation. He's a good man. I trust and admire him a great deal.

Since we first met in west Texas, I have turned to Don many times for help and advice. I've never been disappointed. We were together in Midland, Texas, when we set out in the oil business with big dreams for ourselves and our families. We were together in Austin, Texas, 7 years ago, when I began serving the people of Texas. He was there on our journey that led to the Presidency.

At every turn, Don has always been a wise and strong and steady influence. I thank him for taking this assignment. I am proud to call him my Secretary of Commerce. I'm honored to call him my friend. He has his work cut out for him. We came to Washington with a bold agenda, and we don't intend to waste any time.

Don shares with me a conviction that open trade is a powerful force for good in the world. In all our dealings abroad, we must stand for free markets and for the principles of democracy. We must stand for free and open trade without favoritism and without barriers. We have set a great goal, a world that trades in freedom, and that goal will take all of our commitment.

Secretary Evans has a mission to represent to America's interests in the world. Many American industries and our farmers have met with unfair practices as they try to export their goods to foreign markets. In Don, they'll have an advocate who carries with him knowledge of trade, proven skill as a negotiator, and the full support of the President.

It helps, too, that the new Secretary of Commerce has a background in energy. Our Nation's economy depends on the fossil fuels that keep our engines running. And we must be less dependent on foreign suppliers. Along with my Secretary of Energy, Spence Abraham, Don will help me in pursuing a strategy of increased domestic production and energy independence. Don is a key part of my economic team. We're going to make the case for broad, fair, and responsible tax reductions. We're going to respect and reward the spirit of entrepreneurship in our country, helping small businesses as they expand and provide employment. We are going to make sure that American workers can find quality jobs in our American landscape.

I can't think of a better background for Commerce Secretary than a west Texan

with a creed of hard work and independence and enterprise. Don has always represented those qualities for me. Now he will represent those qualities for America.

Mr. Secretary.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:32 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary Evans' wife, Susan Marinis Evans. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary Evans.

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada and an Exchange With Reporters
February 5, 2001

President Bush. It's my honor to welcome the Prime Minister of our closest friend to the White House. This is the first visitor I have received since I've been the President. We've just had a very good visit. We talked about a lot of subjects, and I confirmed to the Prime Minister that America appreciates our friendship, appreciates our trading partner. We share a long border, and it's been a peaceful border.

I assured him that we will consult and keep him abreast of decisions that we make here that will affect Canada and peace in the world. And I look forward to not only reaffirming our friendship with the country; I look forward to developing a friendship with this good man right here. So it's an honor to welcome you here, sir.

Prime Minister Chretien. Thank you very much, Mr. President. For me, it's a great pleasure to be the first foreign leader to come and visit with you. But we feel it's a kind of a cousin coming to visit, because you know, we are two neighbors for so long, 4,000 miles of border, with no problems, big problems. Whenever they were our problems, we can talk, consult, and try to find an acceptable solution.

So I can tell the press that it was a very friendly meeting and a very productive meeting. We covered a lot of areas and look forward for a very good period with President Bush. On behalf of the Canadians, I want to wish you the best luck in your job. You're at the beginning, and I know that you will be successful. And when you need us, we'll be there, and we hope that when we need you, you will be there.

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

Prime Minister Chretien. Mr. President, if you will allow me in French, now, we had a very good meeting. This is the first time that I had a state visit—President Bush. We talked about many, many issues. We talked about our bilateral relations. We talked about other leaders and other people, and I think that the beginning of our personal relationship is a very good one.

Canada-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, what issue do you think will be the one that will be the biggest test of the leadership in the next 6 months?

President Bush. For me as the President, in regards to Canada?

Q. Yes.

President Bush. Convincing Congress to promote free trade throughout our hemisphere. A free trading hemisphere is going to benefit Canada and will benefit the United States, and we've got a lot of work to do—for me to do—to get fast-track negotiating authority.

We're going to have a summit in Quebec, and I'm looking forward to being hosted by the Prime Minister, here, and the whole notion is to promote free trade and open markets around the hemisphere.

Canada, Mexico, and the U.S.

Q. Mr. President, there is an impression that you might prefer Mexico over Canada. Do you have a preference for either country?

President Bush. I've got a preference for friends. And the Canadians are longstanding friends of the United States. Mexico is an important country, as well, and I look forward to a meeting with President Fox in a couple of weeks. My preference is for friendly relations in our hemisphere.

I want the people of my country to understand that a foreign policy priority of my administration will be this hemisphere. And it's so important for the United States not to neglect the hemisphere. My first meeting is with the Prime Minister. Shortly thereafter, I'll be meeting with the President of Mexico. And we have great opportunities in this hemisphere to spread prosperity throughout. And it's going to be to our nations' mutual benefit when that happens.

2000 Presidential Election

Q. Mr. President, what did you think of the Prime Minister's comments and those by the former Ambassador here last year that left the impression Canada might have felt it would have been easier to work with Al Gore than with you?

President Bush. I didn't pay attention to it, if he said that. I'm going to prove him wrong. But as for our discussions today, I didn't have any impression whatsoever that the Prime Minister came with any preconceived notion except one thing, that I will promote friendly relations with Canada.

Canada-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, considering your good relations that you had with President Clinton plus what you said in 1993 about relations with President Bush—first President Bush and then-Prime Minister Mulroney, how do you expect your relations with President George W. Bush to be?

Prime Minister Chretien. Our relations will be very good. President Bush is the President of the United States; I'm the Prime Minister of Canada. We have common interests; we'll have different interests. And as we said before, it's very good to have these relations, and it's very good that Canada be seen as an independent country.

President Bush. Hold on. I've got a very important answer to give. The question was fishing. [*Laughter*] We talked about fishing, and I would hope someday to be able to go catch small-mouthed bass on the Prime Minister's—as he called it, the equivalent of Camp David. I could use a few techniques when it comes to fishing for small-mouthed bass. And one day, if all works out well, he can come down and catch large-mouthed bass on my ranch. [*Laughter*]

Q. Golf? Any plans to play golf together?

President Bush. If he gives me enough strokes. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:15 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Vicente Fox of Mexico. A reporter referred to former Prime Minister Brian Mulroney of Canada. After the Prime Minister's opening remarks, he spoke in French, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the Operation of the Andean Trade Preference Act
February 5, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 203(f) of the Andean Trade Preference Act (APTA) of 1991, as amended (19 U.S.C. 3201 *et seq.*), I transmit herewith the third report to the Congress on the Operation of the Andean Trade Preference Act.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,

February 5, 2001.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 6.

Remarks at Tree Top Toys & Books and an Exchange With Reporters in McLean, Virginia
February 6, 2001

The President. I am honored to be here, Carole. Thank you very much. Next time my mother shops, I am going to tell her to double the amount of purchases. [*Laughter*] I want to thank the other small-business owners who are here, as well.

One of the unique things about America is the entrepreneurial spirit of our country. The small-business owner is really the backbone of the Nation in terms of job creation, in terms of hope, in terms of offering dreams for people. I am here to talk to these entrepreneurs about the benefits of the tax relief package, the benefits for the small-business owner.

First, we'll make the code simpler, consolidate the rates from five to four. By dropping the top rate from nearly 40 percent to 33 percent, we really say to the sole proprietor, the business owner, that there is more capital available for you to expand your business if need be, your own money in your own pocket to be able to make sure your small business flourishes. I strongly believe and know that cuts in marginal rates will affect capital growth, which is so important for the growth of small businesses in America.

Secondly, the tax relief package will help the consumers, the customers of the small-business owner. We have an issue in America right now called energy, and the energy prices are beginning to affect the purchasing patterns of the people who come to the shops such as this one. Many of the Americans have got a consumer debt load that is significant, and it is important for us to provide meaningful tax relief for all taxpayers so that they can better manage their own personal accounts.

There is a lot of talk about paying down debt, and my budget that I will submit to the Congress does pay down the national debt. But by cutting taxes on everybody who pays taxes, by recognizing a family of four earning $50,000 a year will receive a $2,000 tax cut, it helps people get out from underneath their own personal debt load. And that's important. It's important for the families; it's important for the small-business owners.

And finally, as Carole mentioned, part of our tax plan eliminates the death tax. Small-business owners work hard to have a financial platform from which they can not only live but also a financial platform

that they can pass on to their heirs. And the death tax is unfair. The death tax is a tax that unfairly penalizes people who have worked hard to build up their own businesses.

So this tax relief package is not only good for taxpayers; it is also good to stimulate and to help the entrepreneurial spirit in America, a spirit seen right here with these good folks who have taken risk, are creating jobs, but most importantly, realized their dreams of owning their own business. So it's such an honor to be here. I appreciate your inviting us. Thank you all for your hospitality. I'll be glad to answer a few questions.

David [David Gregory, NBC News].

Patients' Bill of Rights

Q. Mr. President, can you explain your position on a patients' bill of rights, as proposed today in the Senate? Are you for it, as it was outlined by Senators Kennedy and McCain and others?

The President. Well, I haven't seen all the details. But first, I am pleased that Senator Kennedy and Senator McCain have come together to offer a plan. Inherent in their plan, as I understand, is some tort reform. That is a really important ingredient in order to move patients' bill of rights, as far as I'm concerned. We can't have a patients' bill of rights that encourages and invites all kinds of lawsuits, because the ultimate effect will be to run up the cost of business, particularly for small businesses. And so, as I understand, there is some tort reform language in there.

I'm a little concerned about the size of the cap on punitive damages. I want to make sure that if there is tort reform, it's a tight tort reform package, without a lot of loopholes that will allow trial lawyers to skirt the intent of the law. But as far as I am concerned, I am really pleased with the fact that they are moving legislation in the Senate. It is a good sign that Republicans and Democrats are getting together.

Q. May I just follow up on one point?

The President. Sure.

Q. The administration's meeting last night with Congressman Norwood—was that in any way an effort to stall this effort on a patients' bill of rights for now? Do you feel like anybody's trying to steal your thunder as you're trying to talk about tax cuts?

The President. No, I don't think so, David. I know the reason why our folks met with Charlie Norwood, like we're meeting with other people, is to lay out our principles, is to talk about an administrative initiative. And our initiative is going to encompass many of the principles that are inherent in John's and Senator Kennedy's—John McCain's and Senator Kennedy's bill. All these bills, they are going to get worked out over time.

I just want the people in the House and the Senate to know that I'm coming with a plan. And as you know—and you heard me in the campaign several times talk about the fact that our legislation in Texas, our patients' bill of rights in Texas, was a pretty strong piece of legislation. And one of the things I am concerned about is to make sure that the Federal Government law doesn't override what we did in our State.

There are a lot of details to be worked out. But I am really pleased with the progress, and I am very hopeful that we can get a patients' bill of rights on my desk pretty soon. And the fact that, again, John McCain and Senator Kennedy and others have come together is a good sign.

Airline Labor Disputes

Q. Are you worried about the possibility of strikes at four major airlines, sir, and what can you do about it?

The President. I am worried about strikes at airlines. I think that could have a harmful effect on our economy. And I would urge that the parties settle their disputes. The President has got some opportunities—

if they are unable to do so—some opportunities available, and I will explore all options. But I am concerned about it and so should America.

Africa

Q. Mr. President, it's now clear that the continent of Africa, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, is very important to you. Colin Powell mentioned that over the weekend. But what's unclear are the priorities in sub-Saharan Africa. We understand that there is a problem with AIDS, and they're a mineral-rich country. What are your priorities for Africa?

The President. You bet. Well, the priorities have got to be the same priorities we have for our own hemisphere, for example, or for around the world: freedom, democracy, opportunity through open markets. And so the first place to start on the economic front is to make sure we have free and fair trade with the African Continent. There ought to be significant trade back and forth, and we ought to explore opportunities to do so. If there are barriers—and some are worried about the textile industry barriers, for example—we need to examine them all, and I will instruct Robert Zoellick to do just that.

In terms of having a peaceful continent, it is very important for us to work with countries like Nigeria—to enable Nigeria to have an effective peacekeeping force, to keep warring parties apart on that continent. It's also important for us not to ignore Africa, so that we can anticipate problems before they occur. Oftentimes on that important continent, things get out of hand, and they could have been prevented in the first place, which means to have the Secretary of State and the National Security Adviser pay attention to Africa, which we will do.

Q. Are you possibly thinking of going back—going to Africa?

The President. Well, I'm—one country at a time. [*Laughter*] I'm going to Mexico first. I've got a lot of work to do at home. Gregory—David Gregory brought up a very important issue. It reminds me about how—it should remind you about how involved I'm going to be on pieces of legislation, whether it be patients' bill of rights or tax relief or education reform. I've got a lot of work to do here—to work with the Congress, to make sure that the principles that I think are important are inherent in these different pieces of legislation. I'll be making some trips, but I'm not exactly sure when I would be going to Africa, for example.

Tax Relief Legislation

Q. Mr. President, what is it you think you're going to need to do to get enough Democratic support for your tax cut plan?

The President. Say that again now?

Q. What are you going to have to do to ensure that you get enough Democratic support for your tax cut plan to make sure that it gets down to your desk for a signature?

The President. Well, I appreciate that. The thing I'm going to need to do is to remind Democrats, one, our budget works—that you can set aside payroll taxes for Social Security, set clear priorities, pay down debt, and there's room for the $1.6 trillion tax cut. It started off at 1.3, and evidently it's grown to 1.6.

Secondly, to remind people in Congress that this tax relief package is fair and positively affects the lives of people who are standing up here by me. It is a positive effect on our economy.

Thirdly, remind them, we'd better act. The economy is slowing down, and we need to act and act as quickly as we possibly can, including working with Congress to make sure the tax cuts can take—as much of the tax cuts as possible can take immediate effect to help people.

Q. If I could follow up, do you favor doing something retroactively, or would you simply accelerate the benefits in the first year of your plan?

The President. We'll work with Congress on that. The strategy, or the goal—let me put it to you that way—the goal is to get money in the pockets of the working people as quickly as we can.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:37 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Carole Segal, owner, Tree Top Toys & Books, Inc.

Videotaped Remarks in a Tribute to Former President Ronald Reagan
February 6, 2001

Laura and I have now spent 2 weeks in the house where you lived for 8 years. Everywhere we look, we find reminders of the great men and women who lived here and the achievements they left behind.

Your achievements, Mr. President, are clear to all Americans. They are found in the spirit of our Nation and the peace of the world.

You came here at a time when our country needed confidence. You told us we could be strong again, at home and abroad. And when you left, we were.

You came to the White House when the cold war was real. You told us, even when few believed it, that the evil empire would pass and that freedom would prevail. And your resolve made it happen.

In your time here, you never tried to seize credit, one of the traits we've always admired most about you. But tonight, on your 90th birthday, America knows where the credit belongs. America knows you came here 20 years ago and changed the world. America knows the good heart that always guided you, the unbending principles that always defined you, the kindness and courage and inner grace that makes you the man you are.

For all of that, your country thanks you, Mr. President. Your country honors you. And your country loves you.

NOTE: The President's remarks were videotaped at approximately 10:15 a.m. in Room 457 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building for later broadcast on CNN's "Larry King Live." A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Chemical Weapons Convention Inspections
February 5, 2001

Dear _____ *:*

Attached is a report to the Congress on Chemical Weapons Convention inspections in the United States, submitted pursuant to section 309 of the Chemical Weapons Convention Implementation Act of 1998.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Orrin G. Hatch, chairman, and Patrick Leahy, ranking member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary; Richard Shelby, chairman, and William Duhnke, ranking member, Senate Committee on Intelligence; Henry J. Hyde, chairman, and Tom Lantos,

ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr., chairman, and John Conyers, Jr., ranking member, House Committee on the Judiciary; Porter J. Goss, chairman, and Nancy Pelosi, ranking member, House Committee on Intelligence. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 7. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Remarks at the Tax Family Reunion and an Exchange With Reporters
February 7, 2001

The President. Well, Debora, thank you very much. I'm so honored to see you. And thank you for bringing your son and daughter here. The Vice President and I have been looking forward to this family reunion—tax family reunion. The nice thing about this reunion is, you don't have any annoying relatives to deal with. [*Laughter*] But we're glad to welcome you to the White House.

One of the best parts of the campaign was to meet the hard-working Americans who really make up the backbone of our country. I'd go to the different cities around our great Nation and get off the airplane, and there'd be a tax family. And it was our way to put a face on a piece of important public policy. It was our way to say, behind all the numbers we were talking about and the talk about budget, there were real, live Americans who will benefit.

And I want to thank you all for coming back. I look forward for you to—look forward to thanking you in person. I look forward to you to see the people's house, the place that Laura and I are now fortunate enough to call home.

I have one message for all the folks that were our tax families and all the folks from across the country: You helped me make my case, and now I intend to make good on my promise. I want it to be said that ours is a plan that fulfills a campaign promise. And that's important. A lot of people look toward the political process and say, "Oh, these candidates just say something and really don't mean it." When I campaigned for meaningful tax relief, I meant it. And tomorrow I'll submit a plan based upon exactly what I said on the campaign trail. I look forward to working with Congress to get the plan passed.

During the course of the campaign, I said it's as if our Nation had erected a toll booth right in the middle of the road of the middle class, making it hard for people to access the middle class, making it hard for hard-working Americans to realize more money for their own. And so we're going to start dismantling that toll booth, brick by brick.

It begins by simplifying the code. We'll reduce the rates from five to four.

It recognizes that our Tax Code is unfair. It is unfair to people who struggle to get ahead. It is unfair for the single mom who lives on the outskirts of poverty, who's working hard to provide for her family. For every additional dollar she makes above $25,000, she pays a higher marginal rate on that dollar than someone who's wealthy. And that's not right, and it's not fair. It's not what America is all about, as far as I'm concerned. Our tax code makes the code more fair.

It is also fair that everybody who pays taxes should receive relief, and that's why we drop all rates. We drop the top rate, and we drop the bottom rate, and we expand the child credit from $500 to $1,000. Under our plan, a family of four making $50,000 a year will receive a 50 percent cut in the taxes they pay to the Federal

Government. The average tax load will decrease by $2,000—from $4,000 to $2,000.

As Debora said, she calculated our plan, and she saved $1,000. Maybe for some, the number 1,000 doesn't mean much, and maybe for some, 2,000 doesn't mean much. But for thousands of Americans it means a lot.

I want to assure my friends the tax families who are here that we will submit a budget as expected to the United States Congress, a budget that sets aside all the payroll taxes for Social Security, a budget that sets clear priorities, a budget that pays down the national debt, and a budget that has got room for a meaningful, substantial tax reduction.

And there's a lot of talk about debt in this town, and it should be talked about—national debt. And our plan pays down debt. But I also want the Members of Congress to understand that there are a lot of folks struggling to get ahead who have got high consumer debt. There's a lot of people who are burdened by credit card debt in America. And when you couple that debt overhang with high energy prices, more and more of the backbone of this country struggle to save and struggle to get ahead.

So this tax relief package not only is a way to make sure our economy remains strong; it's a package that understands people need to have more of their own money. It says that with strict budgeting and prioritizing our budget, that when we have surpluses, we must remember who pay the bills in America. And it's these folks who pay the bills in this country. And they deserve relief.

And so I call upon Congress, when they think about tax relief, to think about the members of our tax family who represent all the people of our country, who work hard to get into the middle class and to stay in the middle class.

It's an honor to be your President. I'm so thrilled you all are here to say hello to us. I can't wait to greet you inside.

Thanks for coming, and God bless you all.

Tax Relief Legislation

Q. Mr. President, Republican leaders are pushing for an even larger tax cut, sir. Do you think that's advisable?

The President. The tax cut is the right size. I believe it's the right size. And I think it's going to be very important for us and the Members of Congress to work together. But I'm going to make my case that the size of the tax relief package I propose is right.

Q. So you're saying it would be inadvisable, in your judgment, based on looking at the numbers of the surpluses, et cetera?

The President. I think for those who want to diminish the size of the tax cut, that would be inadvisable, and for those who want to increase the size of the tax cut would be inadvisable. It's the right size.

Office of National AIDS Policy

Q. Could you tell us how it is, sir, that your Chief of Staff didn't know what your plans were for the Office of National AIDS Policy and the President's Initiative for One America?

The President. We're going to have a—we're concerned about AIDS inside our White House, make no mistake about it. And ours is an administration that will fight for fair, just law in the country.

Last question.

Middle East

Q. Mr. President, how concerned are you about the outbreak of violence following the election of Ariel Sharon? And also, can you tell us how you might take a different approach than President Clinton and his administration when it comes to Middle East peacemaking?

The President. We're going to play the hand we've been dealt. And we're going to play it well, with one thing in mind, that we promote peace in the Middle East. And I've talked to leaders in the Middle

East, urging calm, and so has the Secretary of State.

And I just got off the phone with Prime Minister Barak and told him he fought the valiant fight, and he assured me he would support the Government's attempts to bring calm in the region. And we will continue to reach out to the parties in that region to promote an environment of stability and calm, to give the Sharon government a chance to do what he said he was going to do, which was to try to form a unity government and reach out to the parties to promote peace in the region.

See you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:37 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Debora Meskauskas, a single mother who met the President during the Presidential campaign, and her children, Bridget and Mark; and Prime Minister Ehud Barak and Prime Minister-elect Ariel Sharon of Israel.

Letter to Congressional Majority Leaders on the Patients' Bill of Rights
February 7, 2001

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Leader:)

I was grateful for the opportunity to meet with you last month at the White House to discuss our shared goal of passing a strong Patients' Bill of Rights. Over the last two weeks my staff and I have met with Members of Congress from both parties, and I believe that we have an opportunity to work together to enact legislation this year to address this important issue. I am writing to ask for your support, and for the support of all Members of Congress, for a bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights to provide all Americans with protections in managed care.

As Governor of Texas, I worked with Democrats and Republicans to enact some of the strongest patient protection laws in this country. My goal now in seeking Federal legislation is simple: I want to ensure that all patients receive needed medical care and that doctors are allowed to make medical decisions.

To achieve these goals, patients should have the right to an independent medical review of a health plan's decision to deny care. This review should be conducted by medical experts outside the health plan and must be binding on the health plan. I also believe that, following an independent medical review of a health plan's decision to deny care, patients who have been wrongly denied medical care should be allowed to hold their health plans liable in Federal court.

I cannot support a plan, however, that encourages unnecessary or frivolous litigation. Expensive litigation, and the resulting rise in health care costs, would only make it more difficult for Americans to afford health care coverage in the first place. I believe it is possible to provide patients a meaningful remedy when they have been wrongly denied care, without causing other Americans to lose coverage. A responsible remedy for patients should protect employers from the high costs of being subject to multiple causes of action in multiple venues and should provide a reasonable cap on damages.

As you requested, I have enclosed the principles by which I will gauge any piece of Federal legislation. I do not believe that any bill currently before the Congress meets all of these principles. However, I applaud the efforts of Members on both sides of the aisle who have stepped forward to address this issue. I believe we can work together to reach bipartisan agreement this year on a strong Patients' Bill of Rights

that protects all Americans, does not override the patient protections already adopted by states, and avoids costly litigation.

I look forward to working with you and all Members of Congress to enact these principles into law as soon as possible. I also look forward to working with you to provide access to health care for the millions of Americans without health insurance.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Trent Lott, Senate majority leader.

Letter to Congressional Minority Leaders on the Patients' Bill of Rights
February 7, 2001

Dear Leader:

I am writing to discuss our shared goal of passing a strong Patients' Bill of Rights. Over the last two weeks my staff and I have met with Members of Congress from both parties, and I believe that we have an opportunity to work together to enact legislation this year to address this important issue. I am writing to ask for your support, and for the support of all Members of Congress, for a bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights to provide all Americans with protections in managed care.

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provide access to health care for the millions of Americans without health insurance.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Thomas A. Daschle, Senate minority leader, and Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader.

Remarks on Transmitting the Tax Relief Plan to the Congress
February 8, 2001

Thank you very much for that warm welcome. It's good to see so many friends here in the Rose Garden. This is our first event in this beautiful spot, and it's appropriate we talk about policy that will affect people's lives in a positive way in such a beautiful, beautiful part of our national—really, our National Park System, I guess, as you'd want to call it.

This is the land of economic miracles, and we are experiencing one here in our country. Latino businesses are growing faster than the Government can count. Back in 1997 there were 1.4 million Latino-owned businesses. Since then, the number has been growing by an estimated 25 percent. No one is entirely sure of the total. Your success has left all statistics behind, and America is better off for it.

The businesses you have built prove the continuing power of the American ideal, a promise of advancement to men and women of every background. This country appreciates you. We appreciate your vision, your hard work. And I congratulate you for your success.

To succeed, Latino-owned businesses need the same things all businesses need: moderate regulation, a sensible legal system, and a growing economy. For several months, however, our economic growth has been in doubt. And now, it may be in danger.

Americans are hearing, and some feeling, the economic slowdown. Americans hear about the news—many are beginning to actually feel what it means to be in an economic slowdown. Consumer confidence has slumped. Many business leaders are worried. A warning light is flashing on the dashboard of our economy. And we just can't drive on and hope for the best. We must act without delay.

My job is to lead. A President should not wait on events; he must try to shape them. And the warning signs are clear. All of us here in Washington, the President and the Congress, are responsible to confront the danger of an economic slowdown and to blunt its effects.

Today I am sending to Congress my plan to provide relief to all income-tax payers, which I believe will help jump-start the American economy. We must give overcharged taxpayers some of their own money back. We must give low-income families fairer treatment. We must give small businesses a better chance to grow and to hire. For all these reasons, I urge Congress to help me strengthen our economy by lightening the tax load, the tax burden on the American people.

Here's how my tax relief plan will work. We will simplify our Tax Code, reducing today's five brackets to four lower ones: 10 percent, 15 percent, 25 percent, and 33 percent. Families with children will also receive a tax credit of $1,000 per child. We will end the death tax, reduce the marriage penalty, and expand tax incentives for charitable giving.

My plan is directed toward individuals and small businesses. It offers relief for everyone who pays income taxes, and it keeps

our national commitments to Social Security and debt reduction. These are the details. But it is the results that will matter most.

If we pass this tax relief plan in a timely manner, three important things will happen: First, we will return $1,600 to the typical American family with two children. Working families earning between $35,000 and $75,000 will keep anywhere from $600 to $3,000 more each year. With this tax relief, families can save or pay off debt or pay for higher energy bills. This $1,600 is good for a family. Multiplied by millions of families, it is good for our Nation's economy. It means greater demand for your goods and your services at a time when demand may be slowing. I'm committed to accelerating economic growth. Lower interest rates will certainly help, but they need to be reinforced with tax relief as well.

There is talk in Congress of bringing this relief even quicker by making it retroactive to the beginning of this year. I strongly support that idea. We need tax relief now. In fact, we need tax relief yesterday. And I will work with Congress to provide it.

Our economy faces this challenge: Investors and consumers have too little money, and the U.S. Treasury is holding too much. The Federal Government is simply pulling too much money out of the private economy, and this is a drag on our growth.

Over the past 6 years, the Federal share of our GDP has risen from 18 percent to 21 percent, about as much as our Government took during World War II. President John Kennedy faced a similar situation in the 1960s. He warned then against storing up dollars in Washington by taking away more than the Government needed to pay its necessary expenses. "High tax rates," he said, and I quote, "are no longer necessary. They are, in fact, harmful. These high tax rates do not leave enough money in private hands to keep this country's economy growing and healthy."

Forty years later our Treasury is full, and our people are overcharged. Returning some of their money is right, and it is urgent.

The second effect of my plan is to substantially reduce the tax barriers that bar too many Americans from the middle class. Our new 10 percent rate, along with the child credit, will cut Federal marginal tax rates by 40 percent on many struggling taxpayers.

I've talked about this problem for over a year, and I'll talk about it until we fix it. Under current law, say, a waitress who's working hard to get ahead—and she may have two children—earning $25,000 a year, faces a higher marginal tax rate than a successful lawyer earning 10 times as much. That is not right, and that is not fair. The Government would take from her nearly one-half of every extra dollar she earns. Her hardest hours are taxed at the highest rates.

Today, tax codes are sending—our Tax Code sends this message to this woman: Stay where you are; you'll never get ahead. But that is not the message of America, as far as I'm concerned. And it must not be the message of our Tax Code. Our tax system must reward the dreams of a better life.

My plan dramatically reduces the marginal rate on many low-income earners, rewarding overtime or a hard-won raise, encouraging Americans on their path to the middle class. Six million families, one out of every five families with children, will no longer pay Federal income taxes at all under our plan.

This country has prospered mightily over the last 20 years. But a lot of folks feel as if they've been looking at somebody else's party, that they've been looking from the outside. It's time to open the door and welcome everyone in.

And finally, this tax relief plan will be good not just for the short-term needs of our country and for our economy but for the long-term health of our Nation. Every

big business began as a small business. Many of the great companies of our time were founded when the maximum tax rate on small businesses was only 28 percent. Today, many small businesses are paying a tax rate as high as 40 percent. Thousands of sole proprietors, people with dreams, pay high, high rates. That's not how one encourages innovation or job creation or expansion.

My tax relief plan reduces the marginal rates that many small businesses pay. We want you to have a fighting chance in a difficult economy. We also want people to have more funds to reinvest and to grow their businesses. We want to make sure that the next generation of success stories continues far into the future. I hope all of you will help me in this task. We have minds to change, and we've got some laws to pass. Our course is set, and I believe our case is strong.

This week I've been meeting with Americans of all backgrounds—young families, leaders of large companies, entrepreneurs, single moms. All are worried about the direction of our economy. All are agreed that action is needed. And today I'm acting, for your sake.

I urge the Congress to pass my tax relief plan with the swiftness these uncertain times demand. I will now sign a letter of transmittal and soon hope I'll be signing the needed tax relief.

Thank you for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:15 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Tax Relief Plan
February 8, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

Enclosed please find my plan to provide needed tax relief to the American people. Over the last several months, the economy has slowed dramatically. I believe that the best way to ensure that our prosperity continues is to put more money in the hands of consumers and entrepreneurs as soon as possible. I look forward to working with the Congress to enact meaningful tax cuts into law.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
February 8, 2001.

Remarks at the Swearing-In Ceremony for Norman Y. Mineta as Secretary of Transportation
February 8, 2001

Good afternoon to you all. Thank you all for coming. Norm, welcome back to the White House. Usually at events like this, a new Secretary is joining the Cabinet. This time a new Cabinet is joining the Secretary. I'm pleased that you're back. I'm glad that your wife is with us. I'm going to welcome your family members to the Oval Office. Thank you all for coming.

For 21 years, Norm Mineta represented the Silicon Valley in the United States Congress. He understands the great challenges taking place in the economic life of our country. He has an understanding of the

transportation needs of America. He knows that America relies more than ever on the soundness of our roads and rails, bridges and runways. And as our economy grows, so must our capacity to move people and goods quickly and efficiently. This means investment in new infrastructure, as well as overdue repairs of the old. Working with State and local governments, we will work to meet the demands of our growing economy.

Americans are especially concerned about our aviation system. The results of economic expansion are clearly visible at our crowded airports. We must continue to reform and modernize the Federal Aviation Administration, and our Secretary of Transportation brings the talents necessary to address the problems and, more importantly, find the solutions.

Our new Secretary will also work with States and localities in planning new roads and alternative transportation, such as bus and light-rail systems. From Los Angeles to Austin to right here in Washington, the trials of commuting increase every year. It's going to take some clear thinking and creativity to accommodate our Nation's increasing travel demands, and Norm Mineta is the right man for the job.

It's a high honor to serve the two Cabinets, as the Vice President said. Norm has earned this honor. His life is a story of determination and courage and service. As a child, he lived in an internment camp. As a young man, he wore his country's uniform in Korea and Japan. From there, he went on to become a mayor, a Congressman, and a Cabinet Secretary.

I thank him for accepting my invitation to serve again, and I'm honored to have him by my side.

Mr. Secretary.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:30 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary Mineta's wife, Danealia. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary Mineta.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Iraq
February 8, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Iraq that was declared in Executive Order 12722 of August 2, 1990.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
February 8, 2001.

Remarks at J.C. Nalle Elementary School and an Exchange With Reporters
February 9, 2001

The President. Good morning, everybody. How are you?

Students. Good morning.

The President. Thanks for letting me come by to say hello. Shall we get started?

Teacher Nancy Tentman. Boys and girls, we have a very special guest this morning. We are honored this morning to have the President of the United States here with us in our classroom, and he will be reading a story to us this morning. He's here on his visit to promote reading.

The President. I am here to promote reading. Thanks for letting me come by and read. First, I want to introduce the Secretary of Education, Dr. Rod Paige. He's a friend of mine. I knew Rod in Texas. He and I were from Texas. And I asked him to come up and become the Secretary of Education because he did such a fine job of being the superintendent of schools in Houston.

And we're all speaking about superintendents—we've got the superintendent of the Washington, DC, schools with us, Dr. Paul Vance.

Superintendent Paul Vance. Good morning, boys and girls.

Students. Good morning.

The President. Thanks for having us here at Nalle. I'm so glad to see your principal, Ms. Dobbins. She's a pretty special person, isn't she?

One of the things that happens when you get over 50—and I'm over 50—is you have trouble seeing. [*Laughter*] So in order for me to read this book called "More Than Anything Else," I had to put on my glasses.

This is also Black History Month. And what's important about Black History Month is to read about different heroes who have made a difference in making history and to realize there are fantastic role models. So this is a combination of history plus reading. So thanks for letting me come by.

One reason I like to highlight reading is, reading is the beginnings of the ability to be a good student. And if you can't read, it's going to be hard to realize dreams; it's going to be hard to go to college. So when your teachers say, "read," you ought to listen to her.

Ms. Tentman. Thank you.

The President. Also, I hope you read more than you watch TV. That's pretty hard. Does anybody do that, read more than they watch TV? [*Laughter*] It's good to read more than you watch TV. That's how you learn, and it's very important to practice.

Are you ready to go?

Students. Yes.

The President. Has anybody read this book yet?

Students. No.

[*The President read to the students.*]

The President. And that's the end of the story. And the story is about a young fellow who grew up very poor and worked really hard. But he knew something. He knew, if he learned to read, he could change his life. I think it's a great story, don't you?

Students. Yes.

The President. It's a story that teaches the power of reading and what it means. So that's what's important, to be able to read, because you can read somebody else's experiences too, and you can share. And this is the story of an unbelievable young man who became a great reader and a great leader.

So thanks for having me come. Anybody got any questions?

Ms. Tentman. Mr. President, we have a tradition here in our classroom that whenever we read a book—we have a reading chain here in our classroom. In each book we write the title and the author, and we'd be honored if you would join us in our reading chain by adding that book to our reading chain.

The President. I will do that. Thanks for letting me do that.

Good to see everybody.

[*The President signed a link for his book for the classroom's reading chain and then autographed the book.*]

Ms. Tentman. All right. Thank you so much, and we'll add that.

The President. I'm going to leave this here for you, too, as a gift.

Ms. Tentman. Okay. Thank you so much.

The President. Thanks, I appreciate it.

Ms. Tentman. And we will add this, boys and girls, to the end of our chain. And the President has signed it, "More Than Anything Else."

The President. How about that? It's pretty nice, isn't it? Thanks for having me come.

One of the reasons I came is, I think it's important for the Capital to stay focused on public education and public education reforms. One of the key ingredients in our package we sent up to the Congress is a reading initiative. I'm so impressed about what Ms. Dobbins is doing at this school, what the superintendent is insisting upon—accountability-based reading system.

And she told me that they've got a collaborative effort here with the National Institute of Health, which has developed curriculum based upon the science of reading. And it's impressive that the school and the District are willing to set high standards and ask the fundamental question, what works in education; are willing to implement curriculum that works; and then are willing to be held accountable for implementing the curriculum.

And thank you for letting me come. I appreciate you coming.

I'll be glad to answer a few questions.

Racial Profiling

Q. Mr. President, would you be interested in establishing a panel along the vein of what President Johnson did, to look into racial profiling, or perhaps considering an Executive order banning racial profiling?

The President. I'll look at all opportunities, starting with the gathering of information, where the Federal Government can help jurisdictions, gather information, compile information to get the facts on the table to make sure that people are treated fairly in the justice system.

Defense Budget

Q. Mr. President, do you have any—[*inaudible*]—of agreeing to the Pentagon's request that you increase your defense spending, your defense budget, or give a supplemental for 2000?

The President. I've sent the message that I think it's very important for us to not have an early supplemental. Secondly, Secretary Rumsfeld is beginning a review of the defense, a top to bottom review of what's happening in today's military, reviewing missions, reviewing opportunities for change, beginning to look at the transformation policy. And I will look forward to finding out what his report says.

I will be traveling the country next week, talking about some increases in the defense spending, along the lines of what I promised during the course of the campaign, starting with better pay for the men and women who wear the uniform.

Q. But they're saying it's going to affect military readiness.

The President. What's going to affect military——

Q. They're saying that they need more money—excuse me—they're not going to be able to be prepared for——

The President. Well, that's part of the review process. I hear—there are a lot of voices on a lot of subjects regarding the budget. We have yet to submit our budget; I will, later on. But I have said during the campaign, I have said since I've been sworn in, it's important for us to do a top-to-bottom review, to review all missions, spending priorities, and that's exactly what the Secretary of Defense is going to do. And before people jump to conclusions, I think it's important to get that review finished.

Justice Department Budget

Q. What about the Justice Department? Are you asking for specific cuts in—[*inaudible*]?

The President. We're looking at all—we've asked our Secretaries on all Cabinets to take a review of their full budgets, and we'll submit a budget here later on.

Office of National AIDS Policy

Q. Mr. President, on the subject of the AIDS Office, there are still some misunderstanding about whether there is going to be an AIDS czar, like——

The President. Well, there's going to be a focus on AIDS, and people can apply any title they want. But there's going to be a person in my office who has got the responsibility of coordinating the AIDS policy throughout the Federal Government.

Middle East

Q. What did you say to Mr. Arafat?

The President. Oh, I had a good talk with Mr. Arafat. I've also had talks with other leaders throughout the region, and I urged calm. I said it was very important to give the newly elected leader of Israel a chance, a chance to form a government and a chance to do what he said he wanted to do, which is to promote the peace in the region. And I certainly hope that people recognize that change does not necessarily mean that the peace process won't go forward.

I think we ought to take Mr. Sharon for his word, and that is, he wants to promote peace in the Middle East. I look forward to watching him put a government together and then fulfilling what he said he would do.

Q. Are you concerned about the violence yesterday, the bombings?

The President. I'm concerned about all kinds of violence. But I firmly believe that the best policy is to encourage leaders to just remain resolute in their willingness to promote the peace and give the Sharon government a chance to form a government and then to be able to do what he said he wanted to do, which is to promote peace in the Middle East.

Have a good weekend, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:21 a.m. in Ms. Tentman's classroom. In his remarks, he referred to Gloria Dobbins, principal, J.C. Nalle Elementary School; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; and Prime Minister-elect Ariel Sharon of Israel.

The President's Radio Address
February 10, 2001

Good morning. This past week I have been making the case for tax reductions. I've asked Congress to act quickly on my tax relief plan, so that Americans can face these uncertain economic times with more of their own money. I will continue to make that case until relief has passed.

And next week I will also focus on another important issue, our national security. This is the most basic commitment of America's Government and the greatest responsibility of an American President. Our Nation's ideals inspire the world, but our Nation's ships and planes and armies must defend these ideals and sustain our allies and friends.

American influence is unquestioned, but maintaining it requires work in every generation. The relative peace our Nation enjoys today is not inevitable. Peace is earned by strength, and strength begins with the men and women who wear the uniform.

New weapons and technologies are important, but they are only as effective as the people who use them.

On Monday I will travel to Fort Stewart, in Georgia, to meet with soldiers and their families. I want to thank them for their service and give my full support in return. They deserve the best training, the latest and best equipment, and long overdue improvements in their pay, housing, and standard of living. And so, as I promised, I will announce meaningful increases in funding to improve the lives of our men and women in uniform.

There's an old military saying: Soldiers enlist, but families reenlist. We need to treat families well and encourage military careers. All our men and women in uniform, after all, are volunteers. We must make sure our military is a place where Americans are proud to serve and proud to stay.

On Tuesday I will be in Norfolk, Virginia, for a tour of the Joint Forces Command and a glimpse of the next generation of military weapons. America has some big choices to make as we prepare for the challenges and dangers of modern warfare. Battles will no longer be won by size alone; stealth and speed will matter more. And we must make sure our country, itself, is protected from attack from ballistic missiles and high-tech terrorists.

At week's end I will meet in Washington with Secretary of State Colin Powell and our diplomats at the State Department. I selected General Powell for that post, in part, because he brings a soldier's wisdom to the work of diplomacy. His charge is to help me pursue a clear, consistent, and decisive foreign policy. Whenever America acts in the world, our principles must be certain, our intentions beyond doubt, our strength beyond challenge. This is how conflicts are avoided. This is how problems are dealt with before they become crises.

Next week's trips signal the priority I place on our military. The highest honor and greatest duty of this office is to serve as Commander in Chief. I want every man and woman in the Armed Forces to know that I respect your service and appreciate your sacrifice.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 11:41 a.m. on February 9 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on February 10. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 9 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on United States Intelligence Provided to Multinational Organizations
February 9, 2001

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In accordance with section 308 of the 1997 Intelligence Authorization Act, I am forwarding to the specified committees of the Congress the eighth semiannual report on U.S. intelligence provided to the United Nations and other multinational organizations. This classified report details the types and volume of the intelligence support provided by the United States during the 6-month period ending September 30, 2000, and the purposes for which it was provided.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Richard C. Shelby, chairman, Senate Select Committee on Intelligence;

Henry J. Hyde, chairman, House Committee on International Relations; and Porter J. Goss, chairman, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 12.

Remarks to the Troops at Fort Stewart, Georgia
February 12, 2001

The President. Thank you. Thank you, General Sharp. Before I begin my remarks today, I want to ask for your prayers for those still missing after the tragic accident involving one of our naval submarines and a Japanese fishing vessel off the coast of Hawaii. Please join me in a moment of silence for those missing, their families, and our friends, the people of Japan.

[*A moment of silence was observed.*]

The President. Amen.

Major General, thank you for your kind introduction and your outstanding leadership. Secretary Rumsfeld, Senator Cleland, and Senator Miller—of the great State of Georgia—other Members of the United States Senate; Representative Kingston and other Members of the House, thank you all for traveling with me today.

General Hendrix, Major General Poythress, Command Sergeant Major McFowler, Command Sergeant Major Ruo, soldiers of the 3d Infantry Division, the 48th Infantry Brigade—as importantly, family members—and all those who make up the Fort Stewart home. It's a great privilege for me to be here today.

You're among the first in the Army to hear me extend "Hooah!"

Audience members. Hooah!

The President. I proudly do so, for there is no greater duty for the President and no higher honor than to serve as the Commander in Chief.

I'm especially honored to be here at Fort Stewart with the "dog-faced soldiers" of the 3d Infantry Division. You've written history with your courage, from the forests of the Marne to the frontlines of the cold war, from Casablanca to the Balkans, from Korea to Kuwait.

Today, you carry on this proud tradition, ready to project American power wherever America's interests are threatened. You've been called the most highly trained and rapidly deployable mechanized force in the world. That is high praise, and you have earned it.

I deeply respect your service. I appreciate your sacrifice. And I know what your service and sacrifice achieve for our Nation. In a dangerous world, our men and women in uniform give America safety. In a world of fast changing threats, you give us stability. Because of you, America is secure. Because of you, the march of freedom continues.

The freedom and security you make possible improve the quality of our life every day. Our Nation can never fully repay our debt to you. But we can give you our full support, and my administration will.

We owe you and your families a decent quality of life. We owe you the training and equipment you need to do your jobs. And when we send you into harm's way, we owe you a clear mission with clear goals. You and your families are the foundation of America's military readiness. But while you're serving us well, America is not serving you well enough. Many in our military have been overdeployed and underpaid. Many live in aging houses and work in aging buildings.

You see some of this right here at Fort Stewart. Twenty-four thousand troops have been processed through Hunter Airfield in

the last 12 months, deploying everywhere from Bosnia to the Bahamas. Some members of the 3d Infantry Division are now in Bosnia for a second or even third time. In a few months, the 48th Infantry Brigade of Georgia's National Guard will also deploy there. Others in the 3d Infantry are getting ready to deploy to Kosovo. You are among the most deployed units in the Army. But you live on a base that has some of the least developed infrastructure. Two-thirds of your barracks need renovation. Some of your workshops are housed in wood buildings built in 1941, buildings that were designed to last 10 years, which are now having their 60th birthday. [*Laughter*]

These problems, from low pay to poor housing, reach across our military, and the result is predictable: Frustration is up; morale, in some places, is difficult to sustain; recruitment is harder. This is not the way a great nation should reward courage and idealism. It's ungrateful, it's unwise, and it is unacceptable.

We will do better. You deserve a military that treats you and your families with respect. And America needs a military where our best and brightest are proud to serve and proud to stay. I have great goals for our military, to advance its technology, to rethink its strategy. But as always, our strength begins with our people.

Today I'm announcing that our proposed 2002 budget will add $5.7 billion in new spending on the people of our military. Our budget will include $1.4 billion for military pay increases—pay increases on top of the increases the Congress passed the last couple of budget cycles; $400 million in funds to improve military housing; and $3.9 billion to improve military health benefits.

If our military is to attract the best of America, we owe you the best. You volunteered for this job. You decided to serve a cause greater than yourself. And I'm proud to lead you, and I'm committed to serve you. In the years ahead, I will have the opportunity to visit with thousands of our men and women in uniform. And I look forward to each opportunity to express my thanks on behalf of our Nation.

I'll never forget that my first visit as Commander in Chief was here, to Fort Stewart, home of the "dog-faced soldiers." You are the Rock of the Marne, and America is rock-solid behind you.

God bless you, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:12 a.m. at Cottrell Field. In his remarks, he referred to Maj. Gen. Walter L. Sharp, USA, Commanding General, and Com. Sgt. Maj. George J. Ruo, Jr., USA, Division Command Sergeant Major, 3d Infantry; Gen. John W. Hendrix, USA, Commanding General, and Com. Sgt. Maj. Andrew McFowler, Command Sergeant Major, U.S. Army Forces Command; and Maj. Gen. David Poythress, The Adjutant General of Georgia.

Remarks to the Troops at Norfolk Naval Air Station in Norfolk, Virginia
February 13, 2001

The President. Thank you all. Thank you very much. General, thank you for that kind introduction, and thank you for your service to our Nation. I'm honored to be here with the Secretary of Defense, Don Rumsfeld. I picked a good man to be the Secretary of Defense.

General Shelton, thank you for accompanying us today. Admiral Perowne, Admiral Mayer, members of the NATO staff. I want to thank the NATO Ambassadors who are here—or the Ambassadors representing NATO countries who are here. I'm honored that you took time out of your

day to come down. I'm thankful that members of the congressional delegation from the Commonwealth of Virginia and other States around the Nation traveled with us. I'm particularly pleased that Senator John Warner is here, along with the former Governor of the State of Virginia, now-Senator George Allen.

I also want to recognize not only Members of the United States House of Representatives but also Ed Schrock, the newly elected United States Congressman from this district. I appreciate Ed traveling with us, as well.

Most of all, I want to thank the men and women who wear the uniform for your warm greeting, and thank you for your service to the United States of America. I also want to thank your family members who are here with you. Oftentimes, we talk about the men and women who wear the uniform; it's also important to remember the husbands and wives of those who do, as well.

Just this morning we're reminded of the risks of your duty and the sacrifices that you make. I ask you to join me in a moment of silent prayer for the dead, the wounded, and missing crew members of the 25th Infantry Division who were involved in a training accident on Oahu this morning.

[*A moment of silence was observed.*]

The President. Amen.

We fly 19 flags here. Together, they symbolize one of the supreme achievements of the last century. NATO is the reason history records no world war III. By preserving the stability of Europe and the transatlantic community, NATO has kept the peace. And the work goes on.

When NATO was formed, the great challenge was to prevent conflict in Europe by a system of collective defense among free nations. In a message to Congress sent with the NATO Treaty, President Harry Truman explained his purpose this way: "The nations signing this treaty," he said, "share a common heritage of democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law. The security and welfare of each member of this community depend upon the security and welfare of all. None of us alone can achieve economic prosperity or military security. None of us alone can assure the continuance of freedom."

This is still true today. Our challenges have changed, and NATO is changing and growing to meet them. But the purpose of NATO remains permanent. As we have seen in the Balkans, together, united, we can detour the designs of aggression and spare the Continent from the effects of ethnic hatreds.

I'm here today with a message for America's Allies: We will cooperate in the work of peace. We will consult early and candidly with our NATO Allies. We will expect them to return the same. In diplomacy, in technology, in missile defense, in fighting wars, and above all, in preventing wars, we must work as one. Transatlantic security and stability is a vital American interest, and our unity is essential for peace in the world. Nothing must ever divide us.

A little while ago I saw an example of that unity in action. From the command center here, I had a glimpse of future threats and of the technology that will be used to meet them. These new systems are impressive, and they're only a beginning in the technologies we will need to deter wars in the decades to come. Because America, NATO, and our allies have made the world more secure, we have an opportunity today given to few nations in history to prepare for the future, to think anew.

Eleven years after the end of the cold war, we are in a time of transition and testing, when it will be decided what dangers draw near or pass away, what tragedies are invited or averted. We must use this time well. We must seize this moment.

First, we must prepare our nations against the dangers of a new era. The grave threat from nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons has not gone away with the

cold war. It has evolved into many separate threats, some of them harder to see and harder to answer. And the adversaries seeking these tools of terror are less predictable, more diverse. With advanced technology, we must confront the threats that come on a missile. With shared intelligence and enforcement, we must confront the threats that come in a shipping container or in a suitcase.

We have no higher priority than the defense of our people against terrorist attack. To succeed, America knows we must work with our allies. We did not prevail together in the cold war only to go our separate ways, pursuing separate plans with separate technologies. The dangers ahead confront us all. The defenses we build must protect us all.

And secondly, as you know firsthand, we must extend our peace by advancing our technology. We're witnessing a revolution in the technology of war. Power is increasingly defined not by size but by mobility and swiftness. Advantage increasingly comes from information such as the three-dimensional images of simulated battle that I have just seen. Safety is gained in stealth and forces projected on the long arc of precision-guided weapons. The best way to keep the peace is to redefine war on our terms.

At my request, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld has begun a comprehensive review of the United States military, the state of our strategy, the structure of our forces, the priorities of our budget. I have given him a broad mandate to challenge the status quo as we design a new architecture for the defense of America and our allies. We will modernize some existing weapons and equipment, a task we have neglected for too long, but we will do this judiciously and selectively. Our goal is to move beyond marginal improvements to harness new technologies that will support a new strategy.

We do not know yet the exact shape of our future military, but we know the direction we must begin to travel. On land, our heavy forces will be lighter; our light forces will be more lethal. All will be easier to deploy and to sustain. In the air, we will be able to strike across the world with pinpoint accuracy, using both aircraft and unmanned systems. On the oceans, we will connect information and weapons in new ways, maximizing our ability to project power over land. In space, we'll protect our network of satellites essential to the flow of our commerce and the defense of our common interests. All of this will require great effort and new spending.

The first budget I will send to Congress makes only a start. Before we make our full investment, we must know our exact priorities, and we will not know our priorities until the defense review is finished. That report will mark the beginning of a new defense agenda and a new strategic vision and will be the basis for allocating our defense resources.

As I announced yesterday, my 2002 defense budget will increase spending on the people of our military immediately with better pay, better housing, and better—[*applause*]. This need is urgent, and it's obvious. [*Laughter*] You give the best, and we owe you the best in return. My 2002 budget will also include $2.6 billion as a down-payment on the research and development effort that lies ahead.

Yet, in our broader effort, we must put strategy first, then spending. Our defense vision will drive our defense budget, not the other way around.

Vice President Cheney often points out that the military itself is like a ship that cannot be turned around in a moment. It has a dynamic and momentum all its own, set in motion by events and decisions long ago and turning only in a wide, long arc. Change will not come easy for America's military and for our allies. But we must know our direction and make our turn. You can count on me to lead these changes in a spirit of respect and gratitude for the military and its traditions.

Some things about America's Armed Forces must never change. In times of trouble and in times of peace, the men and women who wear the uniform are the military's greatest asset. Without your hard work and heroism, your discipline and personal courage, the finest of technologies cannot defend us.

Our NATO Allies have brought their own character and courage to the defense of liberty. We're cast together in a story of shared struggle and shared victory. Here, where three ships from England once passed on their way to Jamestown, we carry on the alliance that joined the old world and the new. We're allies, and we are friends. As long as we stand together, power will always be on the side of peace and freedom.

God bless the United States military. God bless NATO, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:25 a.m. outside the headquarters building of the NATO Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. William F. Kernan, USA, NATO Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic, and Commander in Chief, U.S. Joint Forces Command; Gen. Henry H. Shelton, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; Adm. Sir James F. Perowne, KBE, United Kingdom Navy, NATO Deputy Supreme Commander, Atlantic; and Rear Adm. Martin J. Mayer, USN, Deputy Commander in Chief, U.S. Joint Forces Command.

Exchange With Reporters Aboard Air Force One
February 13, 2001

The President. Glad to see you all again. It's been a while since I've been able to emerge out of the—are you doing okay?

Tax Relief/Legislative Agenda

Q. We wondered what your thoughts were on the retail sales jumping seven-tenths of a percentage point last month, and does that still speak to the need for a tax cut?

The President. Oh, I think it's one good statistic amongst a sea of some pretty dismal statistics. I am concerned about the economy. I strongly believe the combination of monetary policy, fiscal policy will help ease whatever economic pain is on the horizon. I'm obviously very pleased about those numbers and hope that other numbers bear out that piece of good news.

Q. Are you going to try anything beyond what you've done already to try to get Congress to move up? I know you oppose retroactive, but they still have to pass to pass it.

The President. No, we've got to get it through, and I understand that. It's just, you know, the calendar is what it is, and we'll work with the Congress to get all our bills moving as quickly as possible. They're in charge of the timeframe, and I believe we're going to get a good hearing on our pieces of legislation as quickly as possible. But it will take a while.

U.S.S. Greeneville Collision With Ehime Maru

Q. Are you concerned about the allegations from the Japanese that the crew of the *Greeneville* stood by and did not offer assistance?

The President. I called the Prime Minister today. That's why I was 3 minutes late, on the on-time administration. [*Laughter*] But I spoke to Prime Minister Mori. I assured him that we will do everything we can to try to recover and find—find or recover the bodies. He did not bring up that allegation to me. I have yet to

hear all the facts from Secretary Rumsfeld, and I look forward to what he has to say. I am—I did assure him—I apologized on behalf of the country.

President Clinton's Pardon of Marc Rich

Q. Are you distracted at all by the furor over the Marc Rich pardon and the former President?

The President. Not at all.

Q. Not a distraction?

The President. Not at all. I will tell you one thing, just in terms of the former President. All the allegations that they took stuff off of Air Force One is simply not true, for example. But no, I'm not the—sit down; I'll come back.

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

[*At this point, the President left the press area. Later, he returned.*]

The President. As promised. [*Laughter*]

Strategic Vision Reassessment

Q. [*Inaudible*]—talked about modernizing the military a number of times. Should Members of Congress who are trying to promote their own program, like the F–22 or some of these older programs, should they be worried at this point?

The President. Well, I think they ought to wait until we have—the Secretary presents a strategic vision. I said during the campaign—as you know, Tom—I worry about defense spending based upon politics and not based upon a strategic vision. I said that again today. I said the strategy and the spending ought to follow. I don't think Members ought to worry about that. I think they ought to be pleased with that type of approach to budgeting.

Q. Will you be shutting down some major weapons programs?

The President. Let's wait until the review is finished.

President's Meetings With the Military

Q. Mr. President, as you've been talking to the soldiers and sailors the last couple of days, what kind of response do you feel like you've gotten? What have you learned from them?

The President. First of all, I think the men and women who wear the uniform respect the office of the Presidency, for which I'm grateful. I think they're just honored that the President would come and say hello.

I was taken aback by the—"taken aback" isn't the right word. I was—there was a lot of concern about overdeployments yesterday at Fort Stewart.

Q. About what?

The President. Overdeployments, it was on people's minds. I'm not surprised that was—talking about pay, and they were pleased to hear there were going to be some more pay increase coming. But there was a lot of talk about extended trips overseas. It's really not one trip. It's the multiple trips, and it's the time away from base, the training required. You know, people are deployed to the Balkans. They go through training to prepare for the mission in the Balkans. They go to the Balkans. They then come back and have to be retrained for the mission that they used to be a part of. And sometimes the training exercises are not at the base in which they're—you know, their main base. And so there was just a lot of time away from their homes, and that was a concern.

I was touched by the ceremony when I reviewed the troops, to look in the eyes of the men and women who wear the uniform. It's a pretty powerful feeling, and it reminded me that we need to be very judicious and careful about committing our troops.

And today's incident—they called me early this morning about the Blackhawks that had crashed over Oahu. And it was right on the heels of the visit when I got to see—stare people in the eyes, realize how precious the lives are of everybody, of course. The soldiers are my direct responsibility as the Commander in Chief.

It was just—it was a very necessary trip, because it really personalized the job. I

take the responsibilities incredibly seriously. I do want to see more of the military, meet more of the troops. I want to see more of the missions. I get a much better feel for what's happening in different—specialties.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—really respect the office. Did you get some feedback that they appreciate you or appreciate what you are going to do for the military?

The President. I think they've got high hopes for me and my administration. I felt like yesterday's statement, that first things first are the people who wear the uniform and that the first public statement I made since—or the first speech I gave on a military installation had to do with better pay and better housing and better medical care.

There is going to be—you know, redesigning the strategic vision of the military is going to take some time. But we must do it. There are going to be some tough choices to make, but that's why you get elected.

U.S.S. Greeneville Collision With Ehime Maru

Q. Mr. President, on the *Greeneville,* U.S.S. *Greeneville,* would you support a salvage effort?

The President. We've got an unmanned sub heading out there to determine exactly what the status is. I need to find the facts. I think we need to do what we need to do to get the bodies out of there, if they're there.

Q. You said you had apologized to Prime Minister Mori, but you got cut off.

The President. Oh, I'm sorry. Well, I did. I said I was—I apologized on behalf of our Nation for the accident that took place and the lives that are missing.

Q. Did he ask you to do anything or did he——

The President. He asked me to do everything I could—which we are doing—to find, to locate the missing folks.

Q. As a former military man yourself, sir, know the absolute preeminence of safety—every operation. Were you comfortable, as a former military officer that—were taken?

The President. John, I haven't seen the full briefing yet. And that's going to go up through the proper chain of command. I know the Secretary of Defense has asked that question and, once the facts have surfaced, I will—I'm sure it will be brought to my attention, and I'll be able to answer that question better after I hear the facts.

President's Upcoming Visit to Mexico

Q. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Well, I'm looking forward to be with my friend Vicente Fox to make sure that he understands that when I say friends, that we'll be friends. I mean it. There will be a lot of discussions, a lot of issues. Trade is a big issue, energy a big issue, immigration a big issue. And I look forward to discussing them.

It's really a continuation of a chat we had in Dallas. He had been elected; I hadn't been. But we had stopped off in Dallas, had a chance to visit with him. I've known him from before, and I've got a good relationship with him. It's why I'm going to Mexico. I think it's going to be a good signal to the Mexicans and others in our hemisphere that the best foreign policy starts at home. We've got to have good relations in the hemisphere.

I assured the Prime Minister of Canada that my vision of the hemisphere goes both north and south. We had a really good visit, by the way. Chretien is a very interesting man, a down-to-earth fellow.

Mexico and California Energy Shortages

Q. He's the only politician who speaks out of one side of his mouth, and he's admitted that, himself. [*Laughter*] Do you think a potential solution to California's energy crisis lies in Mexico?

The President. Could be. You know, you've been reading talk about, well, Mexico needs to import natural gas. But every

mcf of newly discovered gas in our hemisphere helps the overall supply picture throughout the hemisphere. Now, that sounds obvious, but somehow people are writing that, "Well, you know, the idea of maybe working with Mexico to attract foreign capital, develop natural gas really won't help in the United States." Of course it will help in the United States. It means that there will be less exports from the United States to Mexico. There's an issue evolving right now in California about natural gas going from California to the Mexican powerplant. I don't know exactly what the status is. It's conceivable that that gas will be interrupted, and it will create, obviously, a problem for our neighbors to the south. But gas can flow both ways. And any gas down in Mexico that improves the Mexican situation will help America.

Secondly, the idea of—I am going to discuss this with the President, about improving the powerplants to be able to help additional power get into the western grid. That would obviously be farther west than where we're going to be. But yes, I think with an opportunity—potential.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—natural gas prices. Is there something the Government can do? Some people really need to——

The President. Yes, they are. We supported LIHEAP, of course. But what the natural gas price will end up doing is attracting more investment, more capital, more exploration, which we surely need. We've got a shortage of gas and a growing demand. That's why the price is where it is. The issue in the State of California, they didn't increase the supply of energy, but the demand for energy increased in a significant way. It turns out the Internet, while it created a brand new economy, also created a huge need for power. We need more power, pure and simple. That's part of the discussions with the President of Mexico will be, to determine whether or not there is the ability to jointly work on the ability to generate more power.

Investigation of Presidential Pardons

Q. Sir, I just wanted to follow up on the previous question. You had mentioned—you've often said, about your predecessor, that you want to look forward, and not the past. Do you think it's a good idea for Congress to be investigating pardons or for the Justice Department to do that? Or should they just let it go?

The President. I think it's time to move on. And——

Q. Will you ask Chairman——

The President. No, the Congress is going to what they're going to do. They've already started the process.

Q. What about your Attorney General?

The President. I haven't talked to the Attorney General about it. I read something about it today, but——

Q. He would consider——

Press Secretary Ari Fleischer. The Attorney General just simply said that he would look at what Congress was doing.

The President. Yes, I don't think—didn't investigate; he was responding to a congressional inquiry. You know, the Congress is going to do what they're going to do. My attitude is, you know, all this business about the transition—it's time to move on; it is. It's time to stay looking forward, and that's what I'm going to do.

Q. Are you concerned that there's an—the appearance of a quid pro quo with all of the money flowing into the Democratic coffers?

The President. That's up for the able journalists in America to determine.

Always a pleasure. Sorry we don't get to spend so much quality time like we used to in the campaign.

Baseball

Q. Are you warming up for opening day? It's only 6 weeks.

The President. Down in Houston? [*Laughter*]

Q. Are you going to work with Tony Williams to bring a ball team to Washington?

The President. You're not going to believe this. It was one of the first topics he brought up during our conversation—seriously. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:15 p.m. en route from Norfolk, VA, to Andrews Air Force Base, MD. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori of Japan; President Vicente Fox of Mexico; Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada; and Mayor Anthony A. Williams of the District of Columbia. The President also referred to LIHEAP, the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks on the Situation in the Middle East
February 14, 2001

Good morning. I strongly condemn the terrible act of violence in Israel this morning. I have called Prime Minister Barak to express my condolences to the families of the people killed and to all the Israeli people.

As I told the Prime Minister, the tragic cycle of violent action and reaction between Israel and the Palestinians, particularly the escalation this week, needs to stop. I'm urging all parties to do their utmost to end the violence.

We will continue to work with all parties to try to restore calm to the region.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:55 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, prior to his departure for Charleston, WV. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel.

Remarks in a Discussion With Employers of National Guard Personnel and Reservists in Charleston, West Virginia
February 14, 2001

The President. The Secretary and I are thankful you all are here; very thankful that the good Senator from this great State has traveled with us. It's an honor to be in his presence. He is an eloquent spokesman on what's right about America, and a pretty darn good spokesman about what's needed in West Virginia, I might add. [*Laughter*]

I appreciate the newly elected Congresswoman as well, Shelley Moore, for being here. I want to thank the other members of the delegation.

I'm so pleased to come and talk about the Guard and reservists. I used to be in the Guard, and one of the best things about being the Governor, Governor, is to be the commander in chief of the Guard in Texas, and in your case, West Virginia. It's an honor, and I know you're going to take it and do a good job. You've got a pretty darn good start with a general leading the troops here in West Virginia.

I want you to know, Colonel Raney, I would have come back whether I won or lost. [*Laughter*] I fell in love with West Virginia during my time here. But now is not the time for politics. This is a visit about public policy, and that's the defense of our Nation. I'm going to give a more formal speech later on, but the purpose

of this visit is to listen some but also to assure you.

I understand a couple things that are important: One, the role of the Guard and reservists not only abroad is important but, as importantly, at home. Part of our job is to assess real threats to the Nation and address those threats with corresponding defense policy. I'm worried that we are trying to be all things to all people around the world and, therefore, creating the tension that you accurately described. It's not only a tension for employer to employee; it's tensions, oftentimes, between husband and wife. And overdeployments, constant deployments really create a severe issue for morale all throughout the military. And we're going to address that by starting with redefining the mission or clarifying the mission of the United States military. And that's this: to be trained and prepared to fight and win war and, therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place.

Our administration will keep our commitments, and we've got a lot of commitments to keep. There will be no precipitous withdrawal from the commitments we inherited, but as we go forward we will be careful about troop deployment, judiciously use our troops. We understand that overdeployments not only affect those on active duty but also affect those in the Reserves and Guard. And I appreciate you bringing that up so very much.

I also appreciate very much the opportunity to highlight the patriotic role not only the guardsmen and reservists play but the patriotic role that the employer plays in America. It's a two-way street, and our Nation needs to be grateful for those who understand the bottom line is more than just profit and loss; the bottom line is also service to the country.

There's all kinds of ways employers can do that. They can give generously of health care; they can give generously of contributions and dollars to help in the communities in which they live. But employers also give incredibly generously when it comes to supporting the Guards and reservists—guardsmen and reservists who are now fulfilling much of the mission that is now taking place overseas.

It's a huge honor to be the Commander in Chief. I take the responsibility very seriously. We're going to have a foreign policy that's strong and consistent and clear, with a military that is focused and prepared to keep the peace. And the guardsmen and reservists will play a major role.

Now, Colonel Raney, I'm told that there are some other folks who may want to say something, in which case I'm prepared to listen or answer questions if you have any. If I don't know it, the Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld will. [*Laughter*]

[*At this point, the discussion proceeded.*]

The President. I think it's important for the Nation to understand the critical role the Guard and reservists play in today's mix. And this mission—or this trip today is to clarify the mission, to not only say thanks to the folks of West Virginia but, hopefully, to get people around the country paying attention to reality. And reality is, the Guard and reservists carry quite a bit of the load overseas and also serve—set up some of these good employers as examples for others to look at and to follow.

So, thank you, Governor. Good luck on your speech tonight. You'll do great.

[*The discussion continued. A participant stated that letting everyone know about the opportunities available and having employers encourage people to take advantage of them would contribute to a viable force in the future.*]

The President. John, I appreciate that. The good news is, in your State, is you've got more folks applying for jobs than exist in the Guard and Reserve. So evidently, word-of-mouth advertising is pretty darn effective.

Participant. Our general helps us with that. [*Laughter*]

The President. We've got an overall issue of recruitment and retention throughout all the military. The Secretary and I will address that. It starts with better pay but also requires our Nation to have a focused mission. So it's clear about what the mission of the military is.

And I keep saying this over and over again, and we'll work with our allies to help them understand that our Nation is a nation of peacemakers; we'll help make the peace. But we're going to be reluctant to put troops on the ground to keep people apart, warring parties apart. It's a concern of me and the Secretary and others. And we will work with our allies to make sure they understand what our position is before we take any action.

[*The discussion continued. A participant stated that, given the energy situation, the United States had no choice but to be involved in the Middle East to ensure a continued oil supply.*]

The President. I appreciate you saying that. It reminded me of what Senator Byrd told me the other day. I can't quite put it as eloquently as he did, but he reminded me that we need a national energy policy of which coal needs to be an integral part.

Participant. We are importing 60 percent of our oil daily——

The President. Which is a national security concern.

Participant. ——and about 12 million barrels a day.

The President. It is up to all of us to remind folks that we can safely mine coal, and we can cleanly burn it with the right technology. As a matter of fact, the Senator and I—Senator Stevens—were not only talking about the use of technology at home, clean coal technologies here at home, but also being able to have clean coal technology as part of an export policy, so that nations that have not developed like we have will be able to utilize the technologies that have been developed, much of which have been developed right here in the State of West Virginia.

The energy situation in the country is very serious. Demand is greater than supply. And we can affect demand, and will. We'll work on conservation measures. But we also have got to understand that we need to work on the supply side, Senator, and coal is in abundant supply here in America.

And my job and the job of others will be to convince many in the country who don't believe we can have a clean air policy and burn coal at the same time. I believe we can, and many of the experts know we can. And we've got to do it; we've got to sell the country on that.

In the meantime, we've also got to make sure that we're less dependent on foreign sources of crude oil. The lack of an energy policy and national security concerns go hand-in-hand. And I'm very aware of that, sir.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:35 a.m. in the Armory at the West Virginia Army National Guard Headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Robert E. Wise of West Virginia; and Maj. Gen. Allen E. Tackett, Adjutant General, and Col. William R. Raney, Director of Facilities and Engineering, West Virginia Army National Guard. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to National Guard Personnel and Reservists in Charleston
February 14, 2001

The President. Thank you all. Sit down, please. Well, thank you very much, General. I appreciate those kind words, and I appreciate your warm welcome. I'm glad I came back to West Virginia. This is a State of good people, good folks, down-to-earth folks. And I'm glad to be in your midst again.

I particularly want to say thanks to General Tackett for his leadership. He's one of the finest Guard Generals in the United States of America. All you've got to do is look at his record.

Secretary Rumsfeld and I, we're looking at the General's record. It's because of your service that he looks good—[*laughter*]—because of his leadership that the record is good. So Secretary Rumsfeld and I say thank you, General, for your leadership. It's an honor for us to be here in your midst.

I appreciate the good Governor of this State's kind words. Good luck to you, Governor. He asked me today if he had any advice—if I had any advice to him about his state of the State address tonight. I said I did: Just keep it short. [*Laughter*] But I want to thank you for your hospitality, Governor.

I'm honored to be traveling from the Nation's Capital with one of the most eloquent public servants our Nation has had in a long time, somebody who not only represents the great State of West Virginia well but cares deeply about our country, its standing in the world—a guardian of what is right, protector of the grand traditions in the United States Senate. And that's, of course, the great United States Senator, Senator Robert Byrd.

You all sent somebody who is plenty capable to take the Governor's place in the Halls of Congress, somebody who will represent West Virginia well in the House of Representatives, somebody who brings a lot of class to the office. And that is Shelley Moore Capito.

And traveling with us are two Members of the United States Senate, Senators Stevens and Inouye, as well as Chairman Jerry Lewis. And I want to thank those Members for traveling with us. It just goes to show how powerful—it just goes to show how powerful Senator Byrd is. [*Laughter*] He said, "I think you fellows may need to come over and pay a visit to West Virginia." All of us said, "Yes, sir, we're on our way." [*Laughter*]

I also want to thank Command Master Sergeant Leonard, the senior enlisted man for the Guard and Reserves. Sergeant Leonard, thank you for coming.

Finally, I don't want to embarrass the fellow, but I'm going to. In 1968, July of '68, I was stationed in Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas.

Audience member. Hooah! [*Laughter*]

The President. You don't sound old enough to have been there. [*Laughter*]

But today when I got off the airplane, Master Sergeant David Eshbaugh from West Virginia was there to greet me. He and I shared the same dorm in Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. And David, I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for greeting me at the foot of the stairs when I got off the airplane. And thank you for your service, too.

There is an old saying that example is the true language of men. The example of this State speaks of duty and honor. The people of West Virginia have always answered the call to military service. There are an awful lot of mountaineers who have made this country proud. And the men and women of the West Virginia National Guard and Reserves continue that tradition. When it comes to readiness, as the Governor mentioned, the State's Army and international Guard units are ranked at the

top of our Nation, and the West Virginia National Guard has more people than openings. It's a darn good sign that things are right in the ranks here in this important State.

I also want to recognize the employers of the National Guardsmen and reservists, especially those who are here today. Citizen soldiers have always depended on selfless employers. The generosity of the employers in West Virginia wasn't learned in MBA textbooks or in business schools. It was learned because these folks are patriotic. They care about their State, and they care about their country. You put love of country above love of profit, and you have the gratitude of our Nation.

This is the National Guard's Year of the Employer, and it's a recognition that the employers of the guardsmen and the reservists justly deserve. National Guardsmen and reservists are a part of a great and enduring American tradition. The National Guard itself is the oldest part of America's Armed Forces, with a history reaching back more than three and a half centuries.

During the American Revolution, volunteers and minutemen earned our freedom. Today, our Guard and Reserve help preserve it. The National Guard has a unique role. It serves America within our borders and beyond our borders. You assist your neighbors in times of natural disaster, in flood and storm and fire. The West Virginia National Guard, for example, has been activated for disaster relief 15 times in the last 6 years. All Americans have learned to count on the National Guard in times of crisis to lend a strong and helping hand.

The Guard reservists also provide for the common defense. This has always been so, but it has never been more important than today. During the last few years, American active forces have been reduced in size, even as American commitments have increased. The Guard and Reserves have stepped up to the challenge.

More than ever, you find yourselves a part of overseas missions, serving with your active duty counterparts. In Bosnia and Kosovo, reservists make up 15 to 20 percent of the force. You know firsthand. Less than 2 months ago, a number of airmen from the 130th Airlift Wing came home from Operation Joint Force after flying missions from Germany to the Balkans.

During my tenure as Governor of Texas, hundreds of National Guardsmen and reservists were sent to Bosnia, and I was enormously proud of them. They did what they always do: They performed their duty, just as you performed your duty.

As threats to America change, your role will continue to change. The National Guard and reservists will be more involved in homeland security, confronting acts of terror and the disorder our enemies may try to create. I welcome the important part you will play in protecting our Nation and its people. The National Guard and Reserves are a vital part of America's national defense. And I want you to know that you not only have a former guardsman in the White House; you have a friend.

Beyond the role you play in the Armed Forces, America's citizen soldiers display values that are central to our Nation: character, courage, and sacrifice. You demonstrate the highest form of citizenship. And while you may not be full-time soldiers, you are full-time patriots.

In his book "Citizen Soldier," the distinguished historian Stephen Ambrose wrote this: "At the core, the American citizen soldiers knew the difference between right and wrong. And they didn't want to live in a world in which wrong prevailed. So they fought, and they won. And we, all of us living and yet to be born, must be forever profoundly grateful."

Professor Ambrose was writing about the soldiers of World War II. But his words apply to this audience and to the men and women around the world who proudly wear the uniform. Your uniform shows that you are living your life for others, for your fellow West Virginians in time of suffering and crisis, for your fellow Americans when

our safety is threatened, and for the values and ideals our country represents when our allies and friends ask for help.

All Americans benefit from your service, and we'll always be grateful. Thank you for coming, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:47 a.m. at Yeager Field at the West Virginia National Guard Headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to Maj. Gen. Allen E. Tackett, Adjutant General, West Virginia Army National Guard; Gov. Robert E. Wise of West Virginia; Com. Sgt. Maj. John J. Leonard, Jr., Senior Enlisted Adviser to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs; and M. Sgt. David (Mike) Eshbaugh, 167th Airlift Wing, West Virginia Air National Guard.

Telephone Remarks on Former President Ronald Reagan's 90th Birthday
February 15, 2001

The President. Mrs. Reagan, hi, how are you today?

Former First Lady Nancy Reagan. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Good, thank you. Listen, I'm honored. I'm here in the Oval Office——

Mrs. Reagan. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Well, thank you. And I'm getting ready to sign a birthday card to the President, my first document I'll sign as the President, which is a joint resolution from the Congress——

Mrs. Reagan. Oh, how nice.

The President. ——which expresses our deep gratitude and admiration for President Reagan.

Mrs. Reagan. How nice.

The President. We honor him with his greatness and his goodness. And we honor you, as well, for your strength of character and your service.

So I'm getting ready to sign right now——

Mrs. Reagan. Oh, this is very exciting.

The President. Well, thank you, ma'am. It's exciting for me, as well. It's an honor. And I look forward to sending the document and the pen that I use to you.

Mrs. Reagan. Oh, how nice. How nice.

The President. At any rate, it's great to talk to you.

Mrs. Reagan. Well, it's great to talk to you, too. And I can't thank you enough.

The President. Well, thanks a lot.

Mrs. Reagan. It's wonderful. Wait until I tell Ronnie.

The President. Give the President a hug and a kiss.

Mrs. Reagan. I will.

The President. Thanks a lot.

Mrs. Reagan. Thank you.

The President. Bye-bye.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:35 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House. H.J. Res. 7, approved February 15, was assigned Public Law No. 107–1.

Remarks to State Department Employees
February 15, 2001

The President. Mr. Secretary, thank you very much. It's an honor to be here with you, and thank you all for that warm welcome.

As the Secretary mentioned, I'm focusing this week on America's national security. And few are more important to that mission than the people of the State Department, both Foreign Service and civil service. Our gathering here will be seen by some 10,000 State Department personnel in the Washington area. It will be seen by 37,000 committed men and women, including many Foreign Service national employees in 250 posts all over the world.

So to those in this room, those around the town, those across the world, thank you for what you do on behalf of the American people. You do so much to sustain America's position in the world and so much to foster freedom. And for that, we are grateful.

In a few moments I'll go upstairs to witness the swearing-in of 38 new Foreign Service officers. Our hope is that they draw strength and inspiration from your example, because you all are the finest diplomats in the world.

The flags that surround us here represent every country with whom the United States has diplomatic relations. They are a powerful reminder that you are one department of our Government that literally never sleeps. America's commitments and responsibilities span the world in every time zone. Every day you fulfill those responsibilities with quiet excellence. You solve problems before they become headlines. You resolve crises before a shot is fired. And when tragedy or disaster strikes, you are often the first person on the scene.

The other markers that surround us speak even more directly of your devotion to duty. They memorialize your colleagues who gave their lives to our country. The earliest are from the 18th century, understanding your long record of service and the long march to freedom. Others are all too recent, bitter reminders of the dangerous times we live in, like the ones marked Kenya. I know the example of these American heroes inspires you, just as seeing you all here today inspires me.

It's sometimes said that State is the one Federal department that has no domestic constituency. Well, whoever said that is wrong. Let me assure you that between me and Secretary Powell, you do have a constituency.

Speaking of the Secretary, I chose him to be our Secretary of State because he is a leader whose dignity and integrity will add to the strength and authority of America around the world. He is the absolute right man for the job.

The Secretary and I are counting on you, on your help, as we pursue a clear and consistent and decisive foreign policy, a foreign policy that serves both our vital interests and our highest ideals. Our goal is to turn this time of American influence into generations of democratic peace. This requires America to remain engaged with the world and to project our strength with purpose and with humility.

America will set its own priorities, so that they're not set by our adversaries or the crisis of the moment. We must work closely with our democratic friends and allies in Europe and Asia. We must engage Russia and China with patience and principle and consistency. We must build our trade relations across Africa and help nations that are adding to the freedom and stability of their continent.

And closer to home, we must work with our neighbors to build a Western Hemisphere of freedom and prosperity, a hemisphere bound together by shared ideals and free trade, from the Arctic to the Andes to Cape Horn. Building this hemisphere of freedom will be a fundamental commitment of my administration. Our future cannot be separated from the future of our neighbors in Canada and Latin America. Our bonds of language and family and travel and trade are strong, and they serve us all well.

Some look south and see problems. Not me; I look south and see opportunities and potential. When I travel to Quebec in April and meet with other hemispheric leaders

at the Summit of the Americas, I look forward to doing this: I look forward to discussing how we can build a century of the Americas. And I'll carry this message with me tomorrow when the Secretary and I go to Mexico for my first foreign trip as the President.

These are exciting times in Mexico, times of change and times of possibility. Mexico has seen a new birth of freedom, and trade is creating hope and economic progress. The door is open to a closer partnership with the United States. But nothing about this new relationship is inevitable. Only through hard work will we get it right.

President Fox and I will get started at his ranch tomorrow. I'm looking forward to hearing his ideas on expanding trade throughout the hemisphere, on safe and orderly migration, on expanding educational opportunity for all our children, and what we can do together to fight drug trafficking and other types of organized crime.

President Fox and I met as Governors, and I look forward to renewing and deepening our friendship. But I look forward even more to forging a deeper partnership between our two great nations, a partnership characterized by cooperation, creativity, and mutual respect.

I want to thank you all for welcoming me here today. I'm glad the Secretary invited me. I'm glad I responded positively. [*Laughter*] Oftentimes, those of us who hold high offices don't stop and say thank you as much as we should. So, today I'm doing just that. On behalf of the American people, thank you for the service to this great country, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:28 p.m. in the main lobby at the Harry S. Truman Building. In his remarks, he referred to President Vicente Fox of Mexico.

Remarks at the Swearing-In Ceremony for State Department Foreign Service Personnel
February 15, 2001

Mr. Secretary, thank you very much. I'm so honored that you invite me to your place of business. [*Laughter*] Ambassador Davis, you remind me of my mother. [*Laughter*]

Thank you, Director General Grossman, as well. Family members, it is my honor to be here with you as you watch your loved ones get sworn in. And on behalf of every American, congratulations. You have just become a part of the best diplomatic corps in the world.

In the months and years ahead, Secretary Powell and I will be counting on you, and so will your fellow citizens. Throughout the decades of your career, we'll all be counting on you, even as you go about your work with little fanfare. When you succeed, most Americans, most of the time, will never hear about it. A crisis that is averted just doesn't make a headline; a problem that is solved hardly ever leads the evening news. I have confidence—I have confidence, and so does the Secretary, that you will hold up the legacy of excellence found in this building.

As you take up your first assignments overseas, I want you to remember that you will be the image of America, the face and voice of her values. You will represent the strength of America, our compassion, and our humility. This is a high calling and a difficult one, and your country appreciates your work.

It is the duty of America to support you, as well. This room honors one of America's greatest diplomats, Ben Franklin. Franklin

once wrote, "Keep thy shop, and thy shop will keep thee." Today you join America's diplomatic shop. Our job is to support you as you support and sustain America's interests and ideals around the world.

So once again, congratulations to you all. God bless you, and God bless our country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:25 p.m. in the Benjamin Franklin Room of the Harry S. Truman Building. In his remarks, he referred to Ruth A. Davis, Director, Foreign Service Institute; and his mother, former First Lady Barbara Bush.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Republican Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters
February 15, 2001

The President. It's my honor to welcome Members of the United States Senate and Members of the United States House up here in the Cabinet Room to discuss the budget.

I'll be submitting a budget to the Congress in short order, and I wanted to brief the members of the budget-writing committees about our priorities, our intentions, and of course, get the feedback. I get to propose a budget, and these folks get to write the budget. And we look forward to having a good discussion on it.

Inherent in the budget, of course, is our desire to make sure we protect Social Security—I think there is unanimity around the table for that—that we set clear priorities, that we fund the priorities. In our budget, we're going to prove to the American people that we can pay down debt, fund priorities, protect Social Security, and there will be money left over, which we strongly believe ought to be passed back to the taxpayers.

I look forward to the discussion with the chairman, near-chairman, and thank you all for coming.

I'll be glad to answer a few questions. Yes, Jim.

Federal Budget

Q. Mr. President, will you be telling the Members of Congress that you hope to hold spending to below 4 percent, the increase in spending?

The President. We're not going to give a specific number today, but we are going to argue, make the case that we can slow the rate of spending down; that our spending will be based upon priorities, the priorities I campaigned on; that we will meet the objectives that I talked about in the campaign, which is protecting Social Security, funding public education, strengthening the military, paying down debt—and we'll be paying down debt; but that we believe the right number for the tax relief package is $1.6 trillion.

Tax Relief Legislation

Q. Mr. President, if the Senate were to vote today on your tax package, the vote would probably be 51–49 against you, given that there are two Republicans who have said they're not in favor of it as is. What can you say to Democrats to try to bring more of them on board in the Senate?

The President. I can say, wait until you see our budget. You'll see that it's well thought out, that we meet important priorities. And I—we've got a lot of work to do; I understand that. But this is a democracy; people have different opinions about the subjects.

The people I want to talk to, though—first, before there is any vote—is the American people. And I will; I'll take my case

to the American people about why I think tax relief makes sense. I'll remind Members of both the Senate and the House that there is a lot of debt at the Federal level, but there is a lot of debt at the private level. We've got a lot of people struggling to pay off credit card consumer debt. I'll tell people that if you're a family of four making $50,000, you get an additional $2,000, so you can decide what to do with your money.

So I've got a lot of work to do, but I'm convinced that when the American people hear our plan, they will support it. I think we've got a very good chance of getting the tax package through.

Representative Cynthia McKinney

Q. Mr. President, Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney, who serves on the Armed Services Committee in the House, feels that she was snubbed because she didn't go with you during your defense tour this week. What do you say to her and some of the other members of the Congressional Black Caucus, especially after you met with them saying that you're into an inclusive era?

The President. We had a very good meeting here and discussed a wide range of issues. I'm glad their Members came up, sat right here at this table, and expressed their opinion. My administration certainly never attempts to leave anybody out. And to the extent that Members—any Member feels left out, I'm sorry that that's the case. But we took the Members on that trip, and there will be other trips.

U.S.S. Greeneville Collision With Ehime Maru

Q. Mr. President, were you surprised to learn that there were civilians at the helm of the submarine that sank the Japanese fishing boat?

The President. Well, I think what is going to be necessary is for Secretary Rumsfeld and the Defense Department to review all policy regarding civilian activity during military exercises. I look forward to the Defense Department review of the policies, their current policies, particularly in light of the recent tragedy that took place in Hawaii.

I want to reiterate what I said to the Prime Minister of Japan. I'm deeply sorry about the accident that took place. Our Nation is sorry that the accident happened, and we will do everything we can to help recover the bodies.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:50 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori of Japan. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Memorandum on Expediting Federal Decisions Relating to the Siting and Operation of Power Plants in California
February 15, 2001

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Commerce, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency

Subject: Expediting Federal Decisions Relating to the Siting and Operation of Power Plants in California

Governor Davis of California has directed State and local agencies to expedite the review and licensing of new power generation facilities, and he has requested that Federal agencies do the same.

The Federal Government should make every effort to work with California and to help its citizens. I hereby direct all relevant Federal agencies to expedite Federal permit reviews and decision procedures with respect to the siting and operation of power plants in California. All actions taken must be consistent with statute and ensure continued protection of public health and the environment while preserving appropriate opportunities for public participation.

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 16.

The President's News Conference With President Vicente Fox of Mexico in San Cristobal, Mexico
February 16, 2001

President Fox. Good afternoon. Good afternoon, Mr. President. This morning I have held very productive and cordial talks with the President of the United States, Mr. George W. Bush. We have agreed on a set of principles and values to provide our relationship as neighbors with more constructive dynamics of more intense cooperation, in order to unfold all the potential of our bilateral relations.

The fact that the President—George Bush's first foreign visit has our country as its destination is a clear message of the interest his administration places on strengthening links with Mexico. At the same time, it is quite a distinction.

This starting point is very encouraging, so that both Mexicans and Americans, together, to inaugurate an era of shared prosperity together. I also acknowledge President Bush's demonstration of friendship by coming to Guanajuato, the cradle of Mexico's independence. And I am particularly grateful for his greeting my mother, Dona Mercedes, as well as for his visit to my house—his house—here in San Cristobal.

Let me tell you, Mr. President, that you will always be welcome in this, your home—or, in your language, President, you know that we consider you a friend of Mexico, a friend of Mexican people, and a friend of mine.

The agreements we have reached today are embodied in the document that we have, and we ratified our commitment to values of democracy and the promotion of human rights, as well as the aim of the fruits of development reach all sectors of our society.

The global and hemispheric agenda, also an important part of our talks, as is fitting in a mature dialog between two prominent members of the international community. We have identified a renewed will for cooperation to design, together with our Canadian partners, a region guided by the search for shared prosperity.

We, the Presidents of Mexico and the United States, have the favorable circumstance of beginning our respective mandates simultaneously. This enables us to project our common objectives with a long-term vision and to undertake negotiations in areas that require a decisive and systematic impetus from the two governments.

Mr. President Bush, the spirit in which we have conducted this first working meeting marks the beginning of a novel stage in our bilateral relations. I am certain that we will be able to take advantage of the historic opportunity we have today to set out on the way to a century of shared prosperity. We will face this challenge on the basis of mutual trust, with a fresh and creative vision to advance in the topics of our bilateral agenda.

Once again, welcome, and this is your home.

President Bush. Muchas gracias, amigo, el Presidente de Mexico. Su recepcion tan calida refleja el grande amistad entre nuestros pueblos. Me hace sentir que estoy entre familia.

Thank you very much. It's a great honor to come to Mexico as this important nation enjoys a new birth of freedom, signaled by President Fox's election. Our meetings today have been a really good opportunity to renew our personal friendship and the friendship between Mexico and the United States.

Mexico is the first foreign country I have visited as President, and I intended it to be that way. Our nations are bound together by ties of history, family, values, commerce, and culture. Today, these ties give us an unprecedented opportunity. We have a chance to build a partnership that will improve the lives of citizens in both countries.

I came here today to seek President Fox's views on how we can go about building on our partnership. We enjoyed a warm and substantive and frank dialog on the many issues that shape the relationship between America and Mexico.

We talked about strengthening our trade relationship, which offers hope and opportunity on both sides of our border. We talked about how our two nations can work together to meet our current and future energy needs. We exchanged ideas about safe and orderly migration, a policy that respects individuals on both sides of the border. We talked about expanding educational opportunities. We talked about what we can do together to fight drug trafficking and other types of organized crime.

We also talked about what we can do together to extend the benefits of freedom and prosperity throughout the entire hemisphere. I told President Fox that building a hemisphere of freedom will be a fundamental commitment of my administration. We both look forward to discussing these ideas with other hemispheric leaders in Quebec in April at the Summit of the Americas.

We are welcoming a new day in the relationship between America and Mexico. Each nation has a new President and a new perspective. Geography has made us neighbors. Cooperation and respect will make us partners. And the promise of the partnership was renewed and reinvigorated today.

Thank you very much.

President Fox. If I understood correctly, we're going to take questions in Spanish for the Mexican press, and some questions in English for the American press. So we'll go first to the women first, and here we'll take the Spanish question first.

Immigration Policy/Situation in Iraq

Q. I have two questions, one for the President of Mexico. We've spoken about new agreements and a new path on migration issues. What has been the advancements on the two topics as you—your campaign to open the border for the free transit of people and to have the free trade agreement in the same way that the European Community has done it?

You talked to President Bush about the amnesty, about the illegal aliens in the United States. I have a question for President Bush. What is the message that you want to send right now? What does the United States want to send to the world as a message with the new bombing of Iraq? And above all, why, Mr. Bush, at this point, when you are establishing a dialog with the President of Mexico—why? Is this a beginning of a new war?

President Fox. Actually, we discussed amply the migration issues that we have. But this is not the meeting in which decisions or details are going to be reached, because they do not belong in the power of—the executive power, as such, because they have to have the participation of other groups.

We have spoken on migration from the viewpoint of our countrymen that are in the United States, and we have spoken about the possibilities of working on agreements of temporary legal work and employment. We have spoken on the firm idea that we have of fighting violence against immigrants and to work based on the law and to see how the "coyotes" and all the people that will be taking these people—or the *polleros* taking our illegal workers into U.S. territory.

We have spoken of a long-term vision and approach and constructive approach on this topic. And perhaps here, the most important thing will be presented by President Bush later on. But certainly there is a new attitude; there is a new way of approaching things, much more positive approach to things on this issue of migration.

The conclusion has been to create a commission at the highest level, as it was read in the Guanajuato Proposal, to begin and to discuss and to advance on this topic on very concrete steps. I believe this is a great advancement on what we had before.

President Bush. In answer to part B of your question, the United States is engaged in the Middle East and Persian Gulf. We will remain so. Since 1991, our country has been enforcing what's called a no-fly zone. A routine mission was conducted to enforce the no-fly zone, and it is a mission about which I was informed and I authorized. But I repeat, it is a routine mission, and we will continue to enforce the no-fly zone until the world is told otherwise.

Mr. Fournier [Ron Fournier, Associated Press].

Q. Sir, as you say, this is the first military action you've taken as President of the United States. I'm wondering whether it signals a hardening of the U.S. position towards Iraq. And specifically, is it your goal to drive Saddam Hussein from power? And secondly, are you putting Saddam on notice today that American military action will be more frequent or more forceful than it was before you became President?

President Bush. Mr. Fournier, Saddam Hussein has got to understand that we expect him to conform to the agreement that he signed after Desert Storm. We will enforce the no-fly zone, both south and north. Our intention is to make sure that the world is as peaceful as possible. And we're going to watch very carefully as to whether or not he develops weapons of mass destruction, and if we catch him doing so, we'll take the appropriate action.

President Fox/Drug Certification

Q. Mr. President, President Bush, welcome to Mexico. We will be waiting for you in Cancun. The question is on

globalization; the question, support to Mexico. And another question, certification in Mexico, will it continue? Will it disappear forever? Would you trust our friend Fox?

President Bush. The question is on drug certification and really about our relations with President Fox. I trust your President. He's the kind of man you can look in the eye and know he's shooting straight with you. I appreciate the fact that he was a one-time Governor. I've got kind of partiality to Governors.

We need to work together on the drug issue. One of the reasons why drugs are shipped—the main reason why drugs are shipped through Mexico to the United States is because United States citizens use drugs. And our Nation must do a better job of educating our citizenry about the dangers and evils of drug use.

Secondly, I believe there is a movement in the country to review all the certification process. I'm certainly going to take the message back to the Members of Congress that I firmly believe that President Fox will do everything in his power to root out the drug lords and to halt drug trafficking as best as he possibly can. As you know, he made some very bold and courageous statements about extradition. He showed unique leadership on that issue. It certainly caught my attention. And I believe when the American people and the Members of Congress hear this bold action that he's willing to take, they will understand what I know, that he is committed to battling the drug trade.

Jim—Steve, [Steve Holland, Reuters] sorry. You are? [*Laughter*] We've got you out of order—I know you're Steve. *Stefan, hombre muy bueno.*

Tax Relief Legislation

Q. Sir, now that Republicans have told you there are not enough votes for your tax plan in the Senate, how do you proceed from here? And do you consider cutting the size of it?

President Bush. His question was about our tax plan. I don't agree with that assessment, that there are not enough votes in the Senate. I believe when it's all said and done, we're going to get a tax bill out of the House and the Senate that will be at the level I think it ought to be. I know there is a lot of speculation about Members, but it's early—it's early in the process.

Washington, Mr. President, has got a unique way of asking Presidents to negotiate with themselves. And that's not what is going to happen in this administration. We'll get a tax package because it's the right thing for the American people.

Ours, Mr. President, is getting ready to submit a budget that will set priorities: Education will be a priority; health care for our citizens will be a priority; setting aside Social Security—all the payroll taxes for Social Security will be a priority. We've still got money left over, and I want to pass some of it back to the people who pay the bills, in order to make sure our economy does not drag.

And the President and I talked about economic growth. He knows exactly what I know, that if our economy were to slow significantly, it would affect our abilities to see the benefits of free trade; it would affect the Mexican economy.

And so I want to assure our friends from Mexico that we will put fiscal and monetary—I have nothing to do with monetary policy, of course—but fiscal policy in place that will affect economic growth, because it is beneficial not only for our people but for the Mexican people.

Look, to answer your question directly, we are going to get a good tax cut through, and I think it is going to be the size I'm suggesting.

Situation in Iraq

Q. To President Fox, since you two are working together on several actions that you want to undertake together in a short future and also in the long-term future, do you support the military actions like the

ones like the United States is doing, bombing Iraq? Thank you.

President Fox. I do not have a position or a statement on that topic, specifically because this will be done through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the future.

It's your turn.

President Bush. Short answer, Mr. President. [*Laughter*]

Campbell Brown [NBC News].

President's Visit to Mexico

Q. Much has been made of you choosing Mexico as your first foreign trip. But it is also causing consternation among the European allies and Canada that you are going to put a greater emphasis here at the expense of those countries. What do you say to that, please?

President Bush. Well, I appreciate that question. First, I met with Prime Minister Chretien and assured him that a vision of—a foreign policy that understands good policy starts in the neighborhood is a vision that goes both north and south.

I would hope that nations around the world, and leaders, would understand the logic behind saying that good foreign policy, good relations must be firm on our borders. I can't think of anything more logical and more commonsensical than to understand our hemisphere, which can be and will be bound by freedom and free markets and free trade, is in the interests of our people.

We'll have a foreign policy—one that engages the world. I've rejected isolationism, as you know, and protectionism. Ours is going to be an active foreign policy. It's going to be consistent and firm, one that starts, though, by building friendships, in this case, renewing a friendship. And it should send a strong signal to all nations who watch that if you're our friend, we'll be your friend. And Mexico is our friend and will remain our friend.

Q. Thank you very much, Presidents. A question for President Fox: Do you think that it is not an improper gesture in this for a visit, that the recent bombing of Iraq is what is attracting the attention and would put a shade or a shadow on this meeting here in Guanajuato?

President Fox. I see no reason why we should connect one event with the other one. Here we are in the process of building up and constructing a strategy to foster the economic and human development of a complete region that is formed by three countries that have been associated under a free trade agreement, and the direct relationship between the United States and Mexico that has proven already—that has made advancements very constructively.

The levels of trade that we have had are really fantastic, and they are the envy of many people—many people who had never thought that this year of 2001 with a trade balance of $250 billion. This has meant development for the United States. It has meant employment in the United States. It has meant development and employment in Mexico, as well.

This is what has allowed us to reduce substantially the level of poverty in Mexico. In the last 4 years, more than 4 million poor people have gone beyond extreme poverty levels. This is what we have invested on, to take these people above this level. And all the time that we have invested, discussing these strategic points, allow us to see that there is a possibility of going ahead to get more benefits from good relationships and to be true partners toward prosperity and to be true friends and to be true neighbors.

And this purpose is something that has been clearly stated today, and we're very pleased with it. And we are full of confidence that we can see the future with a more optimistic approach as of today's meeting.

Situation in Iraq

Q. Apologies to you, *Presidente* Fox, for not asking a question about the U.S. and

Mexico. But President Bush, if I may, another question about Iraq: As we understand it, this was in response to violations that have happened over several weeks, perhaps several months. What prompted you to take this decision at this time?

President Bush. The commanders on the ground, rightly, make the decision as to how to enforce the no-fly zone. I want to assure those who don't understand U.S. policy that this is a routine mission. Some of the missions require the Commander in Chief to be informed. This was such a mission. It is not the first time it has happened, regrettably so.

We will continue to enforce the no-fly zones. The no-fly zones are enforced on a daily basis. It is a part of a strategy, and until that strategy is changed, if it is changed at all, we will continue to enforce the no-fly zone.

But anyway, the decision is made on the ground, Jim [Jim Angle, Fox News].

Energy Policy

Q. I would like to ask you whether there was a petition from the U.S. Government as far as oil is concerned, or any requests for support on electricity and oil?

President Fox. No, not specifically. We spoke about the California problems, by itself, and, yes, we are speaking about the possibility of creating an energy policy that will be common to all the northern part of the country and into Canada, the United States, and Mexico and part of Central America, to try to create a synergy or a synergism so that each one of the countries would benefit from all these policies, because there is energy that we need to import in Mexico that we do not have enough, and at this moment we know in some part of the U.S. territory, this is happening, too. And the same could happen to the Central American countries.

Here, what is important is to have a common policy whereby no one takes advantage of the other. But the other way around it, and it's a win/win situation for everyone, that everyone would be benefited from the organization of an energy plan for the benefit of all the continent of, in this case, the northern part of the Americas.

We also spoke about water problems at the border zones. These are common problems that we have, and if we administer and manage these common problems in a timely manner, in a positive and optimistic way, we could mutually be benefited in the water problems that we have at the border. And this is something that obviously we discussed here.

I believe this is the foundation that we laid down for our project today. And we are trying with good will to remove all the obstacles and to take advantage of all the opportunities that we have. And certainly, today we saw more opportunities than obstacles. And therefore, I do ratify that this makes us see the near future with much more optimism than before.

Q. Mr. President, when you met with President Fox in August in Dallas, you talked about the possibility of finding ways to share energy resources. With the current climate in America—energy prices high, supplies low—can you tell me how you pushed that issue today——

President Bush. Yes, I appreciate that.

Q. ——and what sense of progress you have?

President Bush. The question was about energy policy. First of all, good energy policy is one that encompasses not only Mexico but Canada. We must think about energy shortages and energy demands in regards to our hemisphere.

Secondly, the President and I did discuss how best to share resources to the benefit of both countries. We talked about the possibility of exploration in Canada and the United States and Mexico. A cubic foot of gas imported into Mexico is one, obviously, less able to burn in the United States. It is a hemispheric issue, and it needs to be elevated to the Presidential level.

We did talk about power, the generation of power; the possibility as to whether or not in Baja, for example, more power could be added to the western grid. It's an obvious opportunity, if possible. Now, there are some bottlenecks, and one of the things we need to do is address those bottlenecks, one of which is the ability to transmit power from south to north.

Now, there is pipeline availability. And we're going to need to—so when we talk about an energy policy at home, it is also in the context of Mexico and Canada. This is an issue where we need to continue the dialog. It's an issue that is going to affect the people of Mexico and the people of the United States if we don't recognize that we need more supply.

We can conserve better. There's no question about it. But demand is far outstripping supply, which is creating a real problem for the working people of our respective countries. And so this subject, rightly so, took quite a bit of time in our meeting and is going to take more time down the road.

We have a great opportunity to come together and have a strategy that honors Mexico and honors its sovereignty and, at the same time, recognizes that people are what matters most. And we've got to make sure our people have got the energy necessary to be able to find jobs and find work.

President Fox. We are finished.

Thank you very much for coming to the press conference. Good luck, and thank you.

President Bush. They just want to get in the picture.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 2:37 p.m. at Rancho San Cristobal. President Fox and the Mexican journalists spoke in Spanish, and their remarks were translated by an interpreter. In his remarks, President Bush referred to President Saddam Hussein of Iraq and Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada.

Joint Statement by President George Bush and President Vicente Fox Towards a Partnership for Prosperity: the Guanajuato Proposal

February 16, 2001

We met today at Rancho San Cristobal, in Guanajuato, in a dialogue of friends and neighbors to agree on important goals and principles that will govern relations between our two countries.

We are united, as never before, by values and interests that cover the entire span of our rich and broad relationship. That relationship is grounded in our respect for democracy and human rights, not just for ourselves but for all people in every nation. We share a fundamental commitment to free trade as an engine of economic growth and development that leaves nobody behind. And, we are committed to ensuring the rule of law, the framework on which our people's freedom and prosperity depends. This common outlook is the basis for a full, mature, and equitable partnership for prosperity.

Among our highest priorities is unfettering the economic potential of every citizen, so each may contribute fully to narrowing the economic gaps between and within our societies. We acknowledge the dynamism achieved through NAFTA, which has ushered in dramatic increases in trade that have transformed our economic relationship. After consultation with our Canadian partners, we will strive to consolidate a North American economic community whose benefits reach the lesser-developed

areas of the region and extend to the most vulnerable social groups in our countries. To this end, we support policies that result in sound fiscal accounts, low inflation, and strong financial systems.

Migration is one of the major ties that bind our societies. It is important that our policies reflect our values and needs, and that we achieve progress in dealing with this phenomenon. We believe that Mexico should make the most of the skills and productivity of their workers at home, and we agree there should be an orderly framework for migration which ensures humane treatment, legal security, and dignified labor conditions. For this purpose, we are instructing our Governments to engage, at the earliest opportunity, in formal high-level negotiations aimed at achieving short and long-term agreements that will allow us to constructively address migration and labor issues between our two countries. This effort will be chaired by the Secretary of State and the Attorney General of the U.S. and the Secretary of Foreign Relations and the Secretary of the Interior of Mexico.

We attach the utmost importance to issues affecting the quality of life along our common border. We shall work for the economic and social development of our border communities, fight violence and strive to create a safe and orderly environment. We will form a new high-level working group under the auspices of the Binational Commission to identify specific steps each country can take to improve the efficiency of border operations. We will begin immediate discussions to implement the NAFTA panel decision on trucking.

Drug trafficking, drug abuse, and organized crime are major threats to the well-being of our societies. To combat this threat, we must strengthen our respective law enforcement strategies and institutions, as well as develop closer and more trusting bilateral and multilateral cooperation. We want to reduce the demand for drugs and eliminate narcotrafficking organizations. To this end, we will undertake immediate steps to review law enforcement policies and coordination efforts in accordance with each country's national jurisdiction. We will consult with our NAFTA partner Canada regarding development of a North American approach to the important issue of energy resources. Building on the strength of our respective cultures, we will seek to expand our partnership broadly in ways that help secure a better future for our people. Education is a key to that future; we will increase exchanges and internships that help develop human capital and promote respect for each other's rich cultural heritage. We will seek new cooperation in science, technology, and the environment, on which much of our economic progress and our people's well-being will depend. Beyond the bilateral agenda, our two Governments are also ready to discuss regional and hemispheric issues important to both our nations. The Summit of the Americas, to be held in April in Quebec City, will provide a valuable forum in which the hemisphere's democracies can address and advance shared goals of strengthening democratic institutions and stimulating economic prosperity through free trade and education. We reaffirm our support for the creation of a Free Trade Area of the Americas as soon as possible.

We believe our two nations can now build an authentic partnership for prosperity, based on shared democratic values and open dialogue that bring great benefits to our people. We want to move beyond the limitations of the past and boldly seize the unprecedented opportunity before us. In order to achieve these goals and follow up on the commitments we made today, we have agreed to meet frequently, as necessary, over the course of our respective terms of office. We will do so as friends, in a spirit of mutual trust and respect.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

The President's Radio Address
February 17, 2001

Good morning. As you listen to me today, I'm in Texas after a visit to Mexico, where I had a very good meeting with President Vicente Fox. Members of Congress this holiday weekend are in their States and districts. Soon, we'll all head back to Washington with a lot of work ahead of us.

The work begins with a responsible budget. In Washington, people deal with trillions of dollars and sometimes can forget that every bit of it is someone's earnings. My job is to make sure no one forgets. We must be good stewards of your tax dollars.

My budget will fund our priorities from education to defense to protecting Social Security and Medicare. It will pay down our national debt. And when we have done all that, we will still have some money left over. I strongly believe we should return that money, the leftover money, to you, the American people, in the form of tax relief. It is, after all, your money.

My tax relief plan is a fair one, lowering the rate for all taxpayers. The typical family of four with two children will get $1,600 in tax relief. And the greatest benefits, the largest percentage reductions, will go to those who need them most. My plan is pro-growth. It gives our economy a jump-start by leaving more money in the hands of those who have earned it.

My proposal to cut income taxes across the board is now in the hands of Congress. Amid growing concern over the economy and high energy costs, we're seeing a good deal of bipartisan agreement that now is the time to reduce the tax burden and slow the growth of Government spending. In 10 days I'll be taking this case in person to a joint session of Congress.

In addition to debt reduction and tax relief, we have some other important priorities, including a bold proposal to reform American education. Money isn't the whole answer. High standards and accountability matter most. But if we're serious about reforms, like early reading and teacher training, testing on reading and math in every school, the Federal budget must reflect these commitments.

School districts don't need more vague mandates from Washington. They do need clear goals and real support. So my budget for the Department of Education will have a higher percentage increase than any other Federal department. We'll pay for new testing programs and new reading and intervention programs and new choices for parents with children in failing schools. We will spend more on our public schools, but we're going to expect more in return, and this will improve the lives of countless children.

Not long ago, agreement on debt reduction, tax relief, and education reform seemed impossible. But today, people in both parties are impatient with the status quo—with high debt, high tax bills, high energy bills, and falling education standards. This is our chance to act, and we cannot let it pass.

If you happen to see your Congressman or Senator home in your neighborhood this holiday weekend, I hope you'll take time to thank him for working with me to reform public schools and to give tax relief to everyone who pays taxes.

Thank you very much for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:50 p.m. on February 15 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on February 17. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 16 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks at the Dedication of the National Memorial Center Museum in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
February 19, 2001

Thank you, Senator, for your kind words. Thank you all very much. Thank you very much. Mr. Governor, thank you very much. The picture was a better picture. [*Laughter*]

Laura and I are honored to be here. I want to thank the choirs for their beautiful music. I want to thank the congressional delegation for your hospitality. Mr. Mayor, thank you very much. It's good to see you again, sir.

I appreciate so very much the tour of the Memorial Center we just took. It is a really well-done place. It's powerful. Bob Johnson, you and your board deserve a lot of credit. I particularly want to thank our tour guides, Jeannine Gist and Richard Williams and Major Ed Hill. A lot of Americans are going to come and be better people for having walked through this Center.

I want to thank the families of the victims, the survivors, and the fine citizens of the great State of Oklahoma for your welcome.

One of the things that we remember of that day in 1995 is the conduct of the leaders of Oklahoma—Oklahoma City and of your State, particularly your Governor and his great wife, Cathy. You had just taken office, Frank, and yet, in the aftermath of the awful moment you showed such character and strength. America came to admire that, and the people of Oklahoma will never forget it.

Americans found a lot to admire in Oklahoma during those days. You suffered so much, and you responded with courage. Your loss was great, and your pain was deep, but far greater and deeper was your care for one another. That is what lasts, and that's what brings us back to this place on this day.

Memorials do not take away the pain. They cannot fill the emptiness. But they can make a place in time and tell the value of what was lost. The debris is gone, and the building is no more. Now this is a place of peace and remembrance and life.

A mother who lost her daughter here will be working in the new museum. She said, "When I come down here to the memorial, I've always felt a very good feeling. This is where she was happy, and this is where she was last. The time for mourning may pass, but the time for remembering never does."

Here, we remember one act of malice. The Gates of Time record the very moment of it. Yet, we also remember many acts of human kindness and heroism and love. Some were recorded, some not. But by 9:03 on that morning, a new and hopeful story was already being written. The truth of Oklahoma City is the courage and comfort you found in one another. It began with the rescue; it continues with this memorial; it is recorded in this museum.

Together, you endured. You chose to live out the words of Saint Paul, "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Because of this spirit, your memorial belongs to all America. People from all over our country come here every day and will always come to look and remember and say a prayer. Oklahoma City will always be one of those places in our national memory where the worst and the best both came to pass.

The presence of evil always reminds us of the need for vigilance. All of us have an obligation to confront evil wherever and whenever it manifests itself. We must enforce laws and reject hatred and bigotry, and we have a duty to watch for warning signs.

Last year the United States Secret Service conducted a study of targeted violence in our Nation's schools. They found that

most of the time, the person who planned the violence told someone before the attack. In almost every case, the individual displayed some behavior that caused others to be concerned. We all have a duty to watch for and report troubling signs.

The evil that destroys and the good that saves are equally real. Both can be taught. Both can be learned. All order in our society begins in the souls of citizens. Character is often shaped or bent early in life. In every family and in every school, we must teach our children to know and choose the good, to teach values that defeat violence, to teach good kids—kids to respect one another, to do unto others, the meaning of love.

Our first response to evil must be justice; yet a part of us is never satisfied by justice alone. We must search for more, for understanding and healing beyond punishment. Faith tells us that all wrongs are righted and all suffering redeemed. But that faith is tested, especially for those of you with empty chairs at home. Hardest of all is the loss of the children, of the lives taken so soon after they were given.

I hope it helps to remember that we are never closer to God than when we grieve. Faith is tested in suffering. And faith is often born in suffering, for that is when we seek the hope we most need; that is when we awaken to the greatest hope there is; that is when we look beyond our lives to the hour when God will wipe away every tear and death will be swallowed up in victory.

On this Earth, tragedy may come even on a warm spring day, but tragedy can never touch eternity. This is where they were last, but beyond the Gates of Time lie a life eternal and a love everlasting. You in Oklahoma City are victims of tragedy and witnesses to hope. You have overcome evil, and you have suffered with courage. And for that, your Nation is grateful.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:50 p.m. on the lawn at the Oklahoma City National Memorial. In his remarks, he referred to Senator Don Nickles; Gov. Frank Keating of Oklahoma; Mayor Kirk Humphreys of Oklahoma City; Robert M. Johnson, chair, and Richard Williams, member, Board of Trustees, Oklahoma City National Memorial; and Jeannine Gist and Major Ed Hill, members, Board of Directors, Oklahoma City National Memorial Foundation.

Remarks in a Discussion on Education in Columbus, Ohio
February 20, 2001

[*Principal Maria J. Stockard welcomed guests and introduced the discussion participants.*]

The President. Thank you, Maria. Maria, thanks very much for your hospitality. I thank all the people that are on your staff that accommodated this horde of folks that travel with me. [*Laughter*] And I hope we haven't been too disruptive, but it's an honor to be here.

First, I want to say thanks to my friend the Governor. It's good to see you again, Bob. I appreciate your hard work here. I want to thank the congressional delegation that traveled with me: the Senator, two Congressmen—other than Congressman Pat Tiberi from this district. Deborah Pryce and Dave Hobson came down on the plane with us, and I appreciated our discussion, and thanks for your time, both of you. And thank you, Mike, as well, for being here. I want to thank my friends the Wexners for being here.

One of the things we saw was a program of mentors. And it's a good way to lead into the strength of an accountability system and what it means, because a mentor is really not very effective unless there is a need identified. I mean, what we need to use mentors for and a host program for is to combine the love of our citizenry with enabling children to learn to read, in this case, by identifying problems.

One of the things that I'm insisting that the Congress enact is a law that says that if you receive Federal money, you, the State, or the local jurisdiction, must measure to show us whether or not children are learning. The heart of education reform is accountability. The heart of making sure every child learns and no child is left behind is accountability. Because how do you know if you don't measure? How can you possibly judge whether or not a child is learning to read and write and add and subtract unless we know?

A system that refuses to be held accountable is a system that shuffles children through. And guess who gets shuffled through? In my State, oftentimes children whose parents didn't speak English as a first language, inner-city children. It's so much easier to walk into a room and say, "Oh, these kids aren't supposed to learn. Let's just move them through. It'll be okay. Somewhere along the line something positive may happen." That's unacceptable to me, and I think it's beginning to be unacceptable to America. I know it's unacceptable to Rosa.

I got to know Rosa last summer when I was in your school district, and she knows what I know, that good education starts with high standards and the unfailing belief that every child can learn, regardless of their background or their circumstances; secondly, that local control of schools is paramount to change and excellence. It's important to empower the superintendents, like Rosa. She knows what I know, a great principal of a school is going to make an enormous difference as to whether or not children learn. One of the reasons we picked this school is because of Maria's guidance and leadership.

But also, the cornerstone of reform and the need to make sure we meet the national goal of no child being left behind, is to test. I'm unalterably opposed to a national test. Any kind of national test would undermine local curriculum and local control of schools. But I do believe it makes sense and is right to ask the question: If you receive Federal money, what are the results for the money spent? I know that some say, "Well, testing is punishment." No, testing is a diagnostic tool necessary to correct problems early, before it's too late.

Later on, I'll be in St. Louis, Missouri, today, and I'm going to talk about a reading initiative that will start at the Head Start Program. But in order to make sure any reading initiative or any math initiative that takes place is effective, we must measure. And we must make sure that children, by the way, all start at the same spot, at the same starting point, in order for the accountability systems to make sense.

I think it's fundamentally—well, I know it's fundamentally important to ask the question, "What works?" Particularly, "Will, the host program work?" How do you know if you don't measure?

When we ask the question, "What works?"—Rosa asks that question all the time here in the Columbus School District. And the feedback she gets from accountability system will help determine not theory but the practicality of good curriculum and teacher training programs and giving students the necessary language skills to be able to succeed in our society.

So I'm here to talk about accountability as the cornerstone for the kinds of reforms that will empower local folks to make necessary decisions. One of the key components of any accountability system is there must be a consequence. If there is success, there must be a consequence. Oftentimes, the best success, as these local educators

will tell you, is to have a parent walk up—like our good parent here, Brenda—and say, "Thanks for what you're doing. You saved my son," or "You saved my daughter." That's the best feedback. But I also believe there needs to be bonus plans, and my budget will include some notion for bonuses for districts that succeed.

However, if we find failure, there must be a consequence. And I believe that districts ought to be given—those who received Federal money ought to be given a reasonable period of time to correct problems. And there needs to be some intermediate help to help districts correct problems.

But at some point in time there has to be a final moment. At some point in time we've got to say, "Failure is unacceptable." We believe every child can learn, and since every child isn't learning, something else must happen. And I believe the best program is that which empowers local districts, empowers us to make different choices if the children are mired in mediocrity and failure.

I'm excited about the progress I've seen being made on our public school reform in Washington, DC. It starts with the understanding that Washington is not the fount of all knowledge. As a matter of fact, we're going to pass power back out of Washington to empower people at the local level. But it's important for us to have that national goal of every child being educated and the best public school system ever possible on the face of the Earth. And that's a goal both Republicans and Democrats, and those who don't care about any political party, can agree on.

And we're making progress, and I look forward to working with Members on both sides of the aisle to put the most important cornerstone of reform in place, and that's accountability.

Someone who is not afraid of being held accountable because she's got an unbelievably positive record and a positive spirit and a great attitude is the superintendent of schools right here in Columbus, Ohio, Dr. Rosa Smith.

[*Superintendent Rosa Smith welcomed the President and Mrs. Bush and briefly described the Columbus schools accountability system, noting that students were assessed every 9 weeks.*]

President Bush. Thank you, Rosa. As I mentioned, I had the honor of meeting Rosa last summer, and to show you how powerful she is, she said, "You need to appoint Dr. Rod Paige to become Secretary of Education." [*Laughter*] Well, 6 months later, I did. [*Laughter*]

[*Ms. Stockard introduced veteran reading teacher Maisie Glover, who discussed the effectiveness of assessment as a tool to help students succeed.*]

President Bush. I think that's important for people to hear. The assessment system is never meant to punish. It is meant to provide a useful tool to both teacher and specialists and principals and superintendents to determine what works.

There's a lot of discussion about parental involvement in schools. There is nothing that will make a parent more involved than to know whether or not his or her child is learning. One of the things that in my State I did when I was the Governor was encourage there to be open transparency when it came to performance. So everybody knew—so everybody was aware of whether or not their school—a lot of parents think their school is doing just fine, until the results are posted.

And we've got a parent here that I can't wait for you all to hear from. [*Laughter*] I got an earful behind the scenes—[*laughter*]—a positive earful. [*Laughter*] Tell us your story, Brenda.

[*Brenda Seffrin stated that parents must be held accountable also, and she described how her learning-disabled child had progressed after she enrolled him in Ms. Stockard's school.*]

The President. You were going to tell me something? [*Laughter*] Don't panic——

Ms. Seffrin. Why are you putting me on the spot? [*Laughter*]

The President. Join the club. [*Laughter*]

Ms. Stockard. She indicated that she had several questions written——

Ms. Seffrin. Well, I just was wondering if you could recommend any programs for our school to help encourage children—and this is for you, too—to write books, as well as read books. If there was anything that we could do.

The President. My recommendation is you tell Maria that. [*Laughter*]

Ms. Seffrin. Okay. [*Laughter*]

The President. The truth of the matter is, the best way to achieve objectives is to empower people at the local level to make those decisions. That's why a good principal, like Maria, will encourage parental involvement, so she gets feedback from what parents would like to see their children doing.

Part of the problem is Washington. People look at Washington and say, "Well, we've got all the answers up there." And the truth of the matter is, we don't, particularly when it comes to education. We may be able to provide some funding, so long as that funding is not so prescriptive that it hamstrings the ability for people to make decisions necessary—because I can assure you the schools in Columbus, Ohio, are really different from Laredo, Texas. The children are—they're to be loved, but we've got different challenges in different parts of the country. And that is why flexibility is important. And that's why specific programs that you'd like to see incorporated in the schools ought to be taken to the principal and not to some distant land called Washington, DC.

[*Ms. Stockard introduced Gov. Bob Taft of Ohio, who said the report of the State's Commission on Student Success, concerning how Ohio could achieve the best possible system of high standards, assessment, and accountability, aligned with the President's proposals and had support from Ohio legislators.*]

The President. I appreciate that, Governor. Thanks, I—the Governor recognized legislators who will decide the fate of the program. I need to do the same thing. [*Laughter*] One of the things chief executives in government know: We get to propose; we just don't get to write the law. We occasionally get to veto law, but we don't get to write it.

There's a lot of pressure on Members from a couple of fronts. One is the no-testing crowd based upon, "There's no role for government." I strongly disagree, and I hope you agree with me, because we need to be results-oriented people. All we're asking is, is it working? What are the results? There's another segment of our society, the no-testing crowd saying, "All they do is teach the test." Well, just ask Brenda what it's like to see her son get taught how to read, who then was able to pass the literacy test.

There's a group of folks that'll say, "You can't test because it's racist." What's racist is not testing. What's racist, it seems like to me, is giving up on kids, just move them through and hope we get it right—and hope we get it right. One of the most profound statements I heard was from a lady in Houston who was the reading czarina from the Houston Independent School District, who worked for Rod, named Phyllis Hunter. She said, "Reading is the new civil right." That's a pretty powerful statement, when you think about it.

The fate of the program that I've submitted depends upon Members of the United States Congress, and you've elected a good one from the Columbus area named Tiberi—sitting right up here. Are you with me, Pat? [*Laughter*] Not to put any pressure on you. [*Laughter*] Just teasing.

Representative Patrick J. Tiberi. What do you think, Deborah? Sorry. [*Laughter*] Do I have the stage? [*Laughter*]

The President. Yes, you do. You've got the vote, and you've got the stage.

[*Representative Tiberi complimented the President for his passion on the issue of education reform and stressed that all sectors should participate, not just the Federal Government.*]

The President. That means yes. [*Laughter*] Smart man, holding out to negotiate. [*Laughter*] Thanks for traveling with us, Pat.

Representative Tiberi. Thank you.

The President. I am passionate on the subject. I can't think of a more noble goal than to make sure every child is educated. And it's going to happen. You see, the systems in the past have viewed kind of mass migrations of students through, and one of the things that an accountability-oriented system will do is, we start judging each child on his or her individual merit.

One of the keys to success—and I think we're going to get this out of Congress, by the way, and I hope the members of the legislature support the Governor on this—is to do what they call disaggregating results. When you measure, you must measure on a child-by-child basis. Think about what the reform means, that when we start viewing—saying each child matters and we're going to track each child based upon his or her progress, it starts to provide the catalyst for ultimate change, which is a system that slowly, surely evolves away from the mass migration of students through schools to tailoring programs to meet an individual's needs.

The mentoring program that The Limited has put in place is the beginnings of a system that is able to focus on a child on a one-to-one basis. Rosa says that they assess each child's progress on a 9-week basis. That says we're first asking the question, what about this particular child? In the past, accountability systems that really weren't holding people accountable would just lump people into an overall group.

And so I want to applaud the members of the Ohio Legislature for being willing to think about how to encourage reform within the system.

There's a lot of debate about school choice, and there should be. That's fine. But the cornerstone for reform is accountability, ultimately giving parents, if need be, depending on whether the State likes it or not, the opportunity to make a different choice. That's up to the State. As far as I'm concerned, if a district receives Federal money, and that school won't teach and won't change, then at some point in time that money should not go to continue to fuel failure. And one option is charters, and one option is school choice, but another option is private tutoring or private schools. But that's—and the Congress is going to wrestle with that issue.

But the whole reason I'm here today is to remind people that the true agent for reform is accountability and be willing to measure on a child-by-child basis, and then correct on a child-by-child basis, where correction is needed. And you watch what happens in America.

The spirit of reform, and as Pat said, the willingness for people to discuss this issue in an open way is going to really reinvigorate the public schools. And to say to our teachers, loud and clear, "We love you for teaching," and to say to our principals, "Thanks for being the catalysts, the educational entrepreneurs we need," to herald the great superintendents around the country that are making a major difference, that's what this is all about.

And this is something our country must achieve and will achieve. And it's not going to come out of the Federal Government. We're just a small part of it. But one thing the President can do is to continue talking about this issue until we get it right. And that's exactly what I'm going to do.

[*Ms. Stockard then described how her students colored simple bar graphs to chart their own progress toward specific goals*

throughout the school year. Mrs. Bush discussed the impact and value of teachers to the Nation and said she hopes to attract young people to the profession.]

The President. Brenda, have you got anything else you want to say, now that you're warmed up? [*Laughter*]

Ms. Seffrin. No, but thank you for being here. It really meant a lot.

The President. Well, thanks. We're delighted.

Well, what do you think, Gov?

Governor Taft. I think you've got Congressman Tiberi's vote. [*Laughter*] Senator DeWine is looking very supportive back there.

The President. He is supportive.

Governor Taft. And Congresswoman Pryce, as well; I think that she looks supportive. I think you're making some headway. And I just want to say this, we really appreciate the fact that you have come to Ohio to highlight your education program.

The President. It's a great State.

Governor Taft. Really, your first domestic trip outside of Washington. We're honored.

The President. Well, thanks. It's a great State. And it seems like every time I come to Columbus, I'm coming to another school. That's a great testimony to the school district.

And for those in Columbus who don't realize this, actually I've got some roots here. My grandfather was raised in Columbus, Ohio. Yes, Prescott S. Bush. So we're proud of the city and really appreciate the hospitality always shown when we come here.

Thanks very much for having us. Appreciate it.

NOTE: The discussion began at 10:42 a.m. in Room 19/20 at Sullivant Elementary School. In his remarks, the President referred to Representatives Deborah Pryce and David L. Hobson; Senator Mike DeWine; and Les Wexner, State chairman, Business Leadership Council for OhioReads.

Remarks on the Robert Hanssen Espionage Case
February 20, 2001

This has been a difficult day for those who love our country, and especially for those who serve our country in law enforcement and in the intelligence community.

Allegations of espionage of an FBI counterintelligence agent are extremely serious and are deeply disturbing, particularly disturbing for the thousands of men and women who work for the FBI, whose mission is to protect our national security and who now must deal with allegations that one of their own may have undermined it.

I have the utmost confidence in Director Louis Freeh and the men and women who serve in the FBI, those who represent our country in the CIA and in the Justice Department. I thank them for their service. I commend them for their sacrifice. Allegations of espionage are a reminder that we live in a dangerous world, a world that sometimes does not share American values.

I thank the men and women who proudly serve our country. But to anyone who would betray its trust, I warn you: We'll find you, and we'll bring you to justice.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:50 p.m. aboard Air Force One en route from Columbus, OH, to St. Louis, MO. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at Moline Elementary School in St. Louis, Missouri
February 20, 2001

Sarah, thanks for those kind words. And Chris, thank you very much. Now, what you forgot to say is what I can say, and that is, I believe and know that a school succeeds when there is a dynamic principal in charge of the school. And that's the case here at Moline. I also know it's important to have a superintendent of schools who is willing to push the bounds of excellence, and that's what you have in your superintendent of schools.

We're so honored that you would welcome us here. Laura and I are glad to be traveling to the great State of Missouri. I want to thank your senior Senator, Kit Bond. I want to thank Congressman Clay. I want to thank Congressman Akin for your hospitality. And Governor, I'm so pleased you're here as well. We put out an invitation to all the Governors to join us next Sunday night at the White House for dinner, and the Governor has agreed to come and eat some ribs. I think it is—[*laughter*]—maybe not ribs, but—but I appreciate so very much you taking time to be here today.

Boys and girls, thank you all, as well, for your hospitality. We had a chance to listen to some third graders read. They sound like sixth graders to us.

Let me talk a little policy, if you don't mind. There's a time for politics in our society, and that ended a while ago. Now is the time for good public policy, and it starts with the universal goal of every child being educated in America. That sounds like anybody would say that, but to me, it's an achievable goal.

There are some certain principles to which we need to adhere in order to meet that goal: First, setting the highest of high standards; understanding that all children can learn; not accepting excuses when certain children don't learn; not adhering to a system that shuffles children through because it's so much easier to quit as opposed to focus on a child-by-child basis. Good education starts with high standards, whether it be set by the President, the Governor, or the superintendent or the principal or the teacher in the classroom.

Secondly, I strongly believe in what we call local control of schools. I believe it's critically important for those of us in the Federal Government to align authority and responsibility where it belongs, and that is at the local level. There's the old statement, "One size fits all"—doesn't work when it comes to educating children. I fully subscribe to that. You've got different issues, Governor, in the State of Missouri than we had in the State of Texas. We have the same goals, the same objectives, the same heart, but you have a different set of problems. And therefore, it's incumbent upon us in the White House to work with Members of the Congress to pass Federal money back with as much flexibility as possible, to trust local people to set the course for excellence for all the children in the different school districts around the country.

Thirdly, accountability is critically important for—to meet the goal that no child will be left behind. It is incredibly important to measure, because without measuring, how do you know if a child is learning to read and write and add and subtract? How do you know? It seems like it's a fundamentally fair question for those of us in public life to ask. We're spending money; we'd like to know in return whether or not children are learning.

Now, I don't believe the Federal Government ought to design a test, Governor. I think you can design your own. You've certainly done so, at least in this school district; they've designed their own accountability system. It's an accountability system that's so impressive because it's not

just a measurement on an annual basis, it's a frequent measurement to determine whether or not a specific child is learning. And if that child isn't, there's immediate help. When there's a problem diagnosed, help comes. That's what's so important about having accountability. It's the cornerstone for reform.

I'm going to ask Congress to pass legislation that says that any school district which receives Federal money must design a test on an annual basis so that we know. It's the framework for addressing problems early, before it's too late. It says that consequences matter, but more importantly, if we set up the systems right, by disaggregating results, by treating each child as a person, not part of some overall group, we begin to have an education system that says each child matters, and we're going to track each child as he or she goes through the system. It's a critically important part of education reform.

I believe we can do a better job of teaching children to read. One of the reasons we chose this school is not only because of the strong appetite for diagnosing children early and the willingness to cure problems before they become acute, but this is a school that focuses on a reading curriculum that works.

I hope it's said that the Bush administration is willing to ask the question, "What works," and then helps districts implement programs that do work. Phonics works. It's an important part of a good reading—balanced reading curriculum. The reason I know is because I have asked the question to folks at the National Institute of Health. They're not Republicans; they're not Democrats; they're not—they are scientists who have spent a lot of time figuring out how to make sure all children have the capacity to learn. And while there needs to be balanced reading curriculum, it is critically important for us to make sure the curriculum employed around the country is a curriculum that actually will achieve the results that we want, and that is children reading by the third grade.

So I'm sending up to Congress a proposal called Reading First. It is a $5 billion program over 5 years. It will triple the amount of reading money available for local districts to access. It says that inherent in any good program is the need for districts to develop a K-through-two diagnostic tool; that is, a simple tool that will enable K-through-two teachers to determine who needs help early.

There will be money involved in the reading program to help retrain teachers on how to teach a curriculum that works. One of the things that we must recognize in our society, Governor, is that sometimes our teacher colleges do not—are not able to match the hearts of teachers and give them the skills necessary to be effective teachers. There needs to be a lot of retraining, unfortunately. And until the teacher colleges get it right in terms of teaching curriculum that works, it seems like to me, a useful role for Government is to provide funds for teacher retraining. I'm not saying all teacher colleges fail. You would probably argue with me here that Missouri teacher colleges don't fail. But sometimes you find teachers in classrooms who have got all heart but lack the skills necessary to understand the science of reading. And it is incumbent upon us to match the heart and skills together.

We need to make sure that our Head Start programs not only fulfill the social functions and the health functions that they do today but that Head Start programs become, first and foremost, a reading program to give the little guys the skills necessary to be able to come to these elementary schools prepared and ready to take advantage of the programs that these fine elementary schools, like this one, have got and offer for children.

And finally, in order to make sure that a reading program works, there needs to be a strong emphasis on curriculum to help

districts decide what curriculum to choose, what curriculum will work.

I am absolutely convinced that we can do a better job of teaching all children to read, because I start with the thought that all children can learn to read. I refuse to accept systems, and refuse not to challenge systems, that give up on children early.

I came from a State where there was a lot of children whose parents did not speak English as their first language. It was much easier to say, "Gosh, these little kids are too difficult to educate. Let's just move them through." Those days are unacceptable. That frame of mind is not right for America, and we can do a better job. It starts with putting trust where it belongs.

Madam Superintendent, I promise you, I know where the great educational entrepreneurship of America lay, and it lay right here, in districts such as this one, and schools such as this one. It's trust in local people—it starts with trusting local people to make the right decisions. It's a system that is—in its framework, encourages reform when reform is needed and rewards excellence when excellence is found.

And so I'm here, frankly, to call upon the citizens of this important State to help pass legislation that will not only focus on teaching every child to read but legislation that will have at its cornerstone, at its very core, a reform agenda based upon accountability, based upon measuring each child, based upon making sure that no child is left behind.

America is a great land. It will be a greater land when every child is educated. The strength of our country is the public school system. That strength will be even stronger—even stronger—when we insist that every child be measured, every problem corrected, and every child challenged to be the best he or she can be. That can happen, and it is going to happen.

It's an honor to be here. God bless you for what you do, and thank you for your hospitality. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:11 p.m. in Room 2. In his remarks, he referred to Sarah Riss, principal, Moline Elementary School; Chris Wright, superintendent, Riverview Gardens School District; and Gov. Bob Holden of Missouri.

Remarks at a Tax Family Reunion in St. Louis
February 20, 2001

Thank you very much. Before I have a chance to say hello to you all and watch the Mighty Mites skate, I want to talk a little bit—some public policy.

Today I was in St. Louis talking about education. There is no more important subject as far as I'm concerned, to make sure every child gets educated. I know the Yahngs feel the same way. But I also want to talk about the budget, the budget of the United States Government, and the budget of the people of the United States.

I'm going to submit a budget next week to the United States Congress. It is a budget that will set priorities, just like each family does in America—set priorities. My priorities will make sure that we preserve and protect and strengthen Social Security, so that there's a Social Security system available for the Yahngs and their children, and for you, as well. A priority in my budget will be to make sure that the health care system in America is strong for the elderly, for the uninsured, and for all of us concerned about health. A priority will be public education.

Today I talked about a reading initiative which goal is to make sure that children

can read by the third grade. I can't think of a better priority. By the way, I also understand that local control of schools is the best way to achieve that priority.

Last week I spent time touring military bases. The defense of our Nation is a priority. And in my budget I will submit, amongst other things, a pay raise for the men and women who wear the uniform. Restoring morale in the military not only means better pay, better housing, better health care; it also means having a Commander in Chief who will clarify the mission, the mission of the United States military, to have fighting forces trained and prepared to fight war and, therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place.

A priority of mine, in my budget, will be paying down national debt. And yet after setting priorities, there's still money left over. And so while we're concerned about the Federal budget, I'm also concerned about the budget of people such as the Yahngs, who are here standing next to me.

I think it makes sense to understand who pays the bills. I think it makes sense to understand who fills the coffers of the United States, and it's the working people. And so I'm going to ask Congress to pass a tax relief package, recognizing that we can meet priorities but also help families meet their own priorities.

I'm deeply concerned about the high cost of energy. American families are paying more and more for energy these days. I'm concerned about consumer debt. There's a lot of discussion about national debt, and that's a concern, but I'm also concerned that a lot of working folks have got their own debt. And it seems wise to set priorities at the national level and get people their own money, so they can meet their own obligations to meet their own debts.

I'm asking Congress to pass $1.6 trillion in tax relief after we've met priorities. That's over a 10-year period of time. It's a fair plan. It's a plan that says, as opposed to trying to pick and choose who the winners are, that everybody who pays taxes ought to get tax relief. It is a plan that significantly reduces taxes for people at the bottom end of the economic ladder. If you're a family of four making $35,000, you'll receive a 100 percent tax cut. It's an average tax relief, for families, of $1,600. The Yahng family, under the plan I submit, will receive actually more than that. They now pay $2,000 in taxes to the Federal Government. If this plan is enacted by the United States Congress, they'll end up paying $150 of taxes. That's $1,850 more that they can decide what to do with.

It's your money. It will give you a chance to set your priorities for your family. It says that we in the Federal Government have a fundamental trust in the people of America, and that's where our faith should be—in the people. The best Government is that which trusts America, and there's no better way to make that trust explicit than to share your money with you.

I want to drop all rates and simplify the code. The reason this family will receive the tax relief they're going to get is because we've dropped the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent, and doubled the child credit from $500 to $1,000 per child.

As well, I'm going to ask Congress to provide relief from the marriage tax. Our Tax Code ought to encourage family, ought to recognize marriage as a sacred institution. And I think we ought to listen to the voices of the farmers and small-business people and eliminate the death tax, so that those who struggle—[*applause*].

This is a plan that's going to require the people to speak up. It's the beginning of a series of trips around our great Nation where I'm going to make my case, not to the folks in Congress or in Washington, DC, but to the American people. I have an awesome responsibility to be the President of everyone. I assume that responsibility, and I'm going to be the President of everyone, and I believe this tax relief plan is fair for everyone who pays taxes in America. It is the right thing to do at this point in our history.

It also makes economic sense. I am concerned about our economy. I'm concerned about its—that we've lost some wind in our sails. I believe good monetary policy combined with good fiscal policy, will provide a needed second wind to economic growth. We must keep the pie growing so that people who want to work can find a job, people who want to dream are able to realize their dreams in the entrepreneurial—as a small-business person or as an entrepreneur.

One of the great strengths of America is the entrepreneurial spirit of our country. Any President and the Congress must do everything in our power to create an environment where the entrepreneur can flourish, where people can realize their dreams. America is a land based upon dreams, a land where people should aim high, and our Tax Code ought to encourage capital formation and economic growth. But most of all, America is made up of fine, decent, honorable citizens, citizens who work hard every day to provide for their families—just like my friends here—citizens who, once the Nation meets our priorities, ought to keep their own money, so you can spend, and you can save, and you can dream.

I'm so thankful that you all came. I really appreciate you all standing up here today with me. I'm pinching myself every day. [*Laughter*] It is an unimaginable honor to represent the great people of this country, the greatest country on the face of the Earth, and all my public policy will be designed to keep it great and to invigorate our people.

Thank you for coming, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:50 p.m. at the Kirkwood Community Center. In his remarks, he referred to Chuck Yahng, assistant sports information director, St. Louis University, his wife, Amanda, and their children, Evan and Claudia.

Remarks at Townsend Elementary School in Townsend, Tennessee
February 21, 2001

The President. Thank you all very much. Fred, thank you very much. I appreciate your invitation.

Principal Fred Goins. We appreciate your coming.

The President. And I'm glad I accepted. It's a beautiful part of the world. I was touched by the number of your citizenry who came and lined the roads as we came in to wave and say hello, and I thank them for that as well. I wish I could thank them in person. I hope they realize my wave was a sincere wave of gratitude.

I want to thank Gary Pack, the superintendent of schools. Let me say a couple things about what I've learned. I've learned this as a parent; I've learned it as a Governor; I know it as the President, that a school is really only as good as its principal, and when you have a fine principal, you've got a fine school. And I appreciate your service. And the same with the superintendents.

But with—the heart and soul of any education system, of course, are the teachers. And I want to thank those who are teaching. I'm sorry that my wife is not here with us today. If she were giving the speech—and most of you, if you had heard both of us, would rather hear her—[*laughter*]—she would say that one of her missions will be to convince Americans who are coming up to be a teacher. There's nothing more noble than to teach. And so,

to the teachers of this school and the teachers throughout all of Tennessee, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

I also want to thank my friend, the Governor of your State, Don Sundquist. He is a good man, and he married—like me—he married above himself. [*Laughter*] But Laura and I love Don and Martha. They have been our friends for a long time, and I appreciate your hospitality.

I want to thank your Senator, Bill Frist. I'm particularly nice to Senator Frist these days, since much of what I'm proposing is going to need to be passed out of the United States Senate. But I've got a strong ally in Senator Frist and a good friend.

I want to thank members of the Tennessee congressional delegation, Congressmen Duncan and Jenkins and Van Hilleary, for being here, as well. I got to know these folks during the course of the campaign, and they were stalwarts.

I also want to thank my friend, the chairman of the Education Committee, from the State of Ohio, Congressman John Boehner. I am so thankful the chairman is here. I'm going to be discussing education policy today, the framework for good policy, and it's going to require the leadership of John and—on the House side and Frist and others on the Senate side to get this bill through. So Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for not only being here—I'm surprised they didn't check you at the border coming in. [*Laughter*] But I'll let you on the plane so we can fly back together and talk policy.

I'm also most appreciative of the mayor of Knoxville, Tennessee, for being here. I've known Mayor Ashe for years and years and years, and he has done a fabulous job of being a fine public servant in Knoxville. So Victor, thank you for coming.

And finally, a former public servant, a distinguished Tennessee citizen, a man whose son is—sees my daughter at the University of Texas, hopefully in the library—[*laughter*]—and that's Lamar Alexander.

I want to thank these distinguished officials. I want to thank the local officials. Senator, thank you, as well. Thank you for coming.

There's no more important subject than public education. We must get it right to make sure no child is left behind. My philosophy is this: First, all of us in positions of responsibility must set the highest of high standards for every child. I believe every child can learn, and that ought to be indelibly etched into our national conscience, that every single child in America has got the capacity to learn and we should accept nothing less. And we must set high expectations for every child. We must raise the bar.

I also strongly believe in local control of schools. I believe the best way to chart the path to excellence for every child in America is to insist that authority and responsibility be aligned at the local level.

So I look forward to working with the Members of the House and the Senate to pass power out of Washington, to provide flexibility for the Federal funds so that the Governors, superintendents, principals can design programs that meet your specific needs. As the old adage, one size does not fit all in public education—it is very true. It is very true. We had the same goal in Tennessee and Texas, and that is, every child learn. But we've got different issues in Texas than you have in Tennessee, and that's why we need to have flexibility.

The cornerstone of reform, as far as I'm concerned, is not only high standards and maximum flexibility but strong accountability systems. I think it's so important to measure. I think it's a legitimate thing—I know it's a legitimate request from those of us in public life to say, if you receive taxpayers' money, you measure, and you show us whether or not the children are learning.

And when I ask Congress to pass legislation that says, in return for Federal help, the State of Tennessee, local jurisdictions must develop accountability measures on an

annual basis, three through eight, to determine whether or not our children are learning. It is essential we do so.

Now, I know there's some around who will say, "We can't measure. It's not the proper role of the Government." Well, I believe the proper role of any government at any level is to insist upon results. There are some who will say, "Well, we can't have the test because all they'll do is teach the test." Well, I went to a writing class here in this school, and they were teaching the children to write, and therefore, they were able to pass the test.

You don't teach the test when it comes to literacy. We went to a Title I classroom—or a classroom with Title I students in it, where the teacher was using some of the most advanced thought about teaching reading, a balanced approach including phonics. You teach a child to read, and he or her will be able to pass a literacy test. I don't buy teaching the test as an excuse to have a system that doesn't hold people accountable for results.

Finally, there are some who will say, "You can't test because it is a matter of race to test." I think it is a matter of race not to test. I think it's racist not to test, because oftentimes in our school districts, those who are most easy to shuffle through are those who live in the inner cities or whose parents may not speak English as a first language. No, we must measure because we want to know. We want to know when there's success.

When a teacher told me in that classroom, she said, "We're making great progress in our new reading program here. It's been in place for 3 years. We're making fine progress," we know because there's accountability. People should welcome accountability. It's a way to diagnose and to solve problems. It's a way to say that every single child matters in America, and not one child ought to be left behind.

I don't support, my friends in Congress don't support the design of a national test. All a national test will do is undermine local control of schools. But we look forward to working with States and local jurisdictions to develop accountability systems that meet your needs so we achieve what we want. And that is an education system focused on each individual, an education system that diagnoses early and solves problems early.

Yesterday I also outlined some funding priorities of mine. I'm going to submit a budget next week to the United States Congress. It's a budget that sets clear priorities. A priority is going to be to make sure that our Social Security System and the payroll taxes are saved for Social Security and the Social Security system is strong. A priority would be Medicare. A priority is going to be to make sure our troops are well paid and well housed and well trained, so that we can keep the peace. A priority is going to be, pay down debt. A priority is going to be tax relief, so hard-working Americans have got more money in their pocket to pay down their own debt and to cover the cost of high energy costs.

A priority is going to be public education, as well. As a matter of fact, in the budget I submit, the largest increase of any department will be for the Department of Education. Federal funding for the Elementary and Secondary School Act will go up by $1.6 billion, an 8 percent increase in funding.

I think it's so important for us to prioritize public education. At the same time, we prioritize—make it a priority of making sure our money is spent well. A priority has got to be diligence when it comes to taxpayers' money. And that's why I'm confident the combination of an increase in spending coupled with education reform that holds people accountable is the right path for America to take.

And finally, yesterday I proposed additional spending for a national reading initiative that will set this goal: Every child will be reading at the appropriate level by the third grade. It's going to require schools, districts willing to challenge the status quo

if children are failing. It's going to mean we're going to have to think differently about Head Start. Head Start should remain and will remain a place where children are treated for disease and the health and human service component to it. But I think Head Start ought to be moved to the Department of Education, to highlight the need to make sure that our youngsters get a head start on reading and math.

The billion-dollar-a-year additional money for the reading initiative will allow districts to access money for K-through-two diagnostic testing, for curriculum development, for teacher training, to make sure that the teacher I saw today—the skills that she has are given to all the teachers who are charged with teaching reading.

We've got an aggressive program for public ed. It's a program, though, that has deep faith in the ability of local folks to make sure the children are educated. It's a program the philosophy of which says that the people that care most about the children in towns in Tennessee are the citizens of towns in Tennessee, are the parents in towns in Tennessee, are those concerned folks who every day try to figure out how to make your community a better place to live.

Now, the great strength of America lies in the hearts and souls of our citizens. It lies in the classrooms. It lies in the after-school activities, the Scout troops, run by local citizens. And our philosophy, the philosophy of the bill that I'm going to submit to the Congress, incorporates that greatness of America in its core.

It's a thrill to be here in Townsend. It is a—you're the heartbeat of America. And you're the future of America, by making sure every single child gets educated.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:03 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Gary Pack, director of schools, Blount County School District; Mayor Victor Ashe of Knoxville, TN; and Lamar Alexander, former Governor of Tennessee and former U.S. Secretary of Education. The President also referred to Title I of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law No. 103–382), which amended Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Public Law No. 89–10).

The President's News Conference
February 22, 2001

The President. Good afternoon. It's been about a month now since I've taken office, and I thought it appropriate to come by and have a press conference. Before I do so, though, I'd like to make a few comments.

One of my missions has been to change the tone here in the Nation's Capital to encourage civil discourse. I think we're making pretty good progress. I want to thank the Democrats and the Republicans who have been coming up to the White House to hear me make my case. I appreciate their responsiveness. I just hope they vote for my agenda that I'll be submitting next week in a budget address to the Congress.

I have a reasonable and balanced budget. It meets growing needs with a responsible rate of increase in spending. It funds priorities. And my administration has no higher priority than education.

Yesterday I announced that the Department of Education will receive the largest percentage increase of any department in the Federal Government, a little more than an 11 percent increase. But with new money will come high expectations. We

must insist on results and support programs that work. It is in the best interests of American children that we reform our public schools by having strong accountability at its core.

Our budget will honor commitments of America's senior citizens. Social Security and Medicare funds will be protected for Social Security and Medicare. We're now spending $216 billion on Medicare. Under my budget, Medicare spending will increase by more than 21 billion in 2002. My budget also locks away $2.6 trillion of the $5.6 trillion surplus for Social Security over the next 10 years.

Our budget is fiscally responsible. If enacted, it will reduce debt by an unprecedented amount over the next 4 years. Altogether, about 60 percent of the projected Federal surplus will be used to fund priorities and to reduce debt.

After we've funded our priorities, after we pay down an unprecedented amount of debt, we'll still have money left over, which leaves us with two options: First is to spend it on bigger Government, or return it to the taxpayers who earned it. I believe it should be returned to the taxpayers. It's the people's money, and the Government ought to be passing it back after it's met priorities.

It is also necessary because these are uncertain times—increasing layoffs, growing consumer debt, lower consumer confidence—and lower taxes will help our economy. This will be a responsible and fair budget that reflects the Nation's priorities. I invite the American people to listen to what I have to say to the Congress.

I will be glad to answer any questions you have.

Robert Hanssen Espionage Case

Q. Mr. President, in light of the latest spy scandal, should senior FBI officials be required to take polygraph tests? And secondly, what, if any, responsibility should the FBI Director, Louis Freeh, bear for this breach of national security?

The President. I have confidence in Director Freeh. I think he does a good job. I have confidence in the men and women who work at the FBI. I am deeply concerned about the current spy case, as is Director Freeh. He has made the right move in selecting Judge Webster to review all procedures in the FBI to make sure that this doesn't happen again. We ought to be concerned about espionage in America. In the statement I made the other day, I said we will be diligent. We will find spies, and we will prosecute them. I am pleased that they caught the spy. Now the courts must act.

Q. Polygraphs—do we need polygraphs, though, to be able to catch them?

The President. I look forward to seeing what Judge Webster has to say. I presume he's going to review that issue and will make a recommendation to the Director and to me.

Q. Mr. President, do you believe that——

The President. It's not your turn, but go ahead. [*Laughter*] Yes, Gregory [David Gregory, NBC News].

President Clinton's Pardons

Q. Do you believe that pardons were for sale in the Clinton White House? And what, specifically, do you think should be done to look into, to investigate the circumstances of the President's brother-in-law accepting money to lobby him on pardons?

The President. David, I—as far as this White House is concerned, it's time to go forward. I've too much to do to get a budget passed, to get reforms passed for education, to get a tax cut passed, to strengthen the military, than to be worrying about decisions that my predecessor made.

I understand there's going to be some people on Capitol Hill that are going to be asking questions. That's their right to do so. But I can assure you our White House is moving forward. And to the extent

the Justice Department looks into this matter, it will be done in a nonpolitical way. During John Ashcroft's confirmation process, I said that the Justice Department will conduct its business in a nonpolitical way, and we will do so.

Q. Can I just follow?

The President. Sure. Yes, David.

Q. Other Presidents are commenting on this matter. On the Rich pardon specifically, former President Carter said that in his opinion, it was "disgraceful." Do you not have an opinion on a power that is absolute and is vested in you as the President?

The President. My opinion is, I will—should I decide to grant pardons, I will do so in a fair way. I'll have the highest of high standards.

But the President made the decisions he made, and he can answer the questions raised by the American citizens and the press corps. This White House is moving forward. We've got a lot to do. We've got a lot of people to convince on our agenda. I think we're making pretty good progress, but there's a lot of work to be done.

Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Russia-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, do you think that U.S.-Russian relations have been damaged by the new spy case? And secondly, are the Russians showing any flexibility on a missile defense system?

The President. I intend to deal with Mr. Putin in a very straightforward way, to be up front with him on all matters. I am, of course, disturbed about the espionage—the alleged espionage that took place. I'm mindful that there are people who don't particularly care what America stands for and people who are interested in our secrets.

Secondly, I was pleased to see comments from Russian leadership that talked about missile defense. It is a—their words indicate that they recognize that there are new threats in the post-cold-war era, threats that require theater-based antiballistic missile systems. I felt those words were encouraging.

When I meet with Mr. Putin, I'm going to talk to him about exactly what he meant by those words. We have no meeting set up yet, I might add, but I took that to be encouraging, Steve. It reminded me of what happened after I met with Mr. Ivanov. Shortly thereafter, Mr. Putin also talked about theater-based systems and the ability to intercept missiles on launch. And to me, it's indicative of his recognition of the realities of the true threats in the post-cold-war era, threats from an accidental launch or threats as a result of a leader in what they call a rogue nation, trying to hold ourselves or our allies or Russia, for that matter, hostage. So I was pleased with what I saw.

John [John Roberts, CBS News].

Sanctions Against Iraq

Q. Sir, the Secretary of State is departing for the Middle East tomorrow. One of the things that he will be discussing with Middle East leaders is the possibility of modifying sanctions on Iraq, and I'm wondering what message he will take from this administration to leaders in the Middle East in the area of sanctions that matter, sanctions that are effective on the regime but do not carry with them the same level of criticism that current sanctions have had in that they affect the Iraqi civilian population more than they do the regime, sir.

The President. We're reviewing all policy in all regions of the world, and one of the areas we've been spending a lot of time on is the Persian Gulf and the Middle East. The Secretary of State is going to go listen to our allies as to how best to effect a policy, the primary goal of which will be to say to Saddam Hussein, we won't tolerate you developing weapons of mass destruction, and we expect you to leave your neighbors alone.

I have said that the sanction regime is like Swiss cheese. That meant that they

weren't very effective. And we're going to review current sanction policy and review options as to how to make the sanctions work. But the primary goal is to make it clear to Saddam that we expect him to be a peaceful neighbor in the region, and we expect him not to develop weapons of mass destruction. And if we find him doing so, there will be a consequence.

We took action last week, and it may be on your mind as to that decision I made. The mission was twofold. One was to send him a clear message that this administration will remain engaged in that part of the world. I think we accomplished that mission. We got his attention. And secondly, the mission was to degrade his capacity to harm our pilots who might be flying in the no-fly zone. And we accomplished that mission, as well.

Q. Sir, if I could follow up——

The President. Yes, John, go ahead.

Q. How would you characterize sanctions that work, sir?

The President. Sanctions that work are sanctions that when a—the collective will of the region supports the policy, that we have a coalition of countries that agree with the policy set out by the United States. To me, that's the most effective form of sanctions.

Many nations in that part of the world aren't adhering to the sanction policy that had been in place, and as a result, a lot of goods are heading into Iraq that were not supposed to. And so, good sanction policy is one where the United States is able to build a coalition around the strategy.

Yes, ma'am.

Legislative Agenda

Q. Mr. President, if I can go back to the controversy surrounding former President Clinton and Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, are you at all concerned that these controversies are serving as a distraction for your administration's agenda? Are you concerned that further congressional hearings will mean that lawmakers are spending more time on those matters than on working on your policies?

The President. I—as I said earlier, I've got a lot of work to do, and I think I've got the Congress' attention. I certainly hope so. There has been a lot of discussion about tax relief, and I'm pleased with the progress being made on that important subject. There's a lot of hot debate that have already taken place, and we've just begun to make the case. I'm beginning to travel around the country to important States—all the States are important, of course, but some States may be more important than others right now in trying to convince some lawmakers to hear the message of the people. This is an issue that affects everybody who pays taxes. Congress is listening to the debate. They're participating in the debate.

There's a lot of discussion about education reform on the Hill, and I'm confident that the focus will be the right focus. And my speech Tuesday night, I hope, will help keep the focus on the agenda.

Yes, ma'am. You're next.

Faith-Based Initiative

Q. Mr. President, why do you refuse to respect the wall between the church and state? And you know that the mixing of religion and government for centuries has led to slaughter. I mean, the very fact that our country has stood in good stead by having the separation—why do you break it down?

The President. Helen, [Helen Thomas, Hearst Newspapers]. I strongly respect the separation of church and state——

Q. Well, you wouldn't have a religious office in the White House if you did.

The President. I didn't get to finish my answer, in all due respect. I believe that so long as there's a secular alternative available, we ought to allow individuals who are helping to be able to choose a program that may be run by a faith-based program, or will be run by a faith-based program.

I understand full well that some of the most compassionate missions of help and

aid come out of faith-based programs. And I strongly support the Faith-Based Initiative that we're proposing, because I don't believe it violates the line between the separation of church and state, and I believe it's going to make America a better place.

Q. Well, you are a secular official.

The President. I agree. I am a secular official.

Q. And not a missionary.

Airstrikes on Iraq

Q. Sir, on the airstrikes in Iraq, the Pentagon is now saying that most of the bombs used in those strikes missed their targets. Given that, what is now your assessment of how successful those strikes were? How much danger do the remaining installations that we missed in those strikes pose to our forces? And would you hit them again if commanders in the field asked for authorization to do so?

The President. I—we had two missions. One was to send a clear signal to Saddam, and the other was to degrade the capacity of Saddam to injure our pilots. I believe we succeeded in both those missions. The bomb assessment damage report is ongoing, and I look forward to hear what the Pentagon has to say as they fully assess, completely assess the mission. And I will continue to listen to the commanders in the field. My job as Commander in Chief is to get input from the commanders in the field, and we will do everything needed to protect our pilots, to protect the men and women who wear the uniform.

Bruni [Frank Bruni, New York Times].

Tax Relief Legislation

Q. You said that your $1.6 trillion tax cut is reasonable and responsible within the outlines of the budget you're going to present. If, when that gets to Congress, things start getting layered on to it, like corporate tax cuts, capital gains, would you still support it? And if it reached your desk at a higher level, would you sign it?

The President. As you know, I shy away from hypotheticals, Pancho. I'm going to resist the Christmas tree effect of tax policy. I don't want people putting ornaments on my plan. I have made it clear to the business interests that the best tax policy is one that reduces the taxes on the people, and I hope they listen to me, and I hope they help me get the tax plan through that I have proposed.

And the reason I feel so strongly about that is, one, a marginal cut will help the economy. Secondly, I am deeply concerned about high energy prices and their effect on the working people in the country. I am concerned about consumer debt. I know there's a lot of talk in Washington about paying down the national debt, and that's fine and good, and our budget will do so. But I am very concerned about the fact that a lot of consumers in our country have got high consumer debt. And I believe we need to share some of their money with them so they can help manage their own personal finances. And I will resist the temptation by folks to pile on their pet projects on to our tax cut.

Q. But if they do pile on?

The President. Well, first of all, I'm not willing to admit defeat right here before I've begun to fight or persuade—let me put it to you that way. I think I've got a pretty good case, and I think that many of the business interests will hear that case.

Yes, sir.

Plan Colombia/Trade Promotion Authority

Q. You've shown a lot of interest in Latin America issues.

The President. Si.

Q. I have a double question for you. The first one has to do with Colombia. There's a big meeting on Tuesday with President Pastrana, and a lot of people are still worried about the implications of Plan Colombia, which your predecessor set in motion, about possible future military involvement of the United States. I want to know your impressions of Plan Colombia.

And my second question has to do with the free trade agreement for Latin America. You're going to be going to Quebec in April. Are you going to ask for fast-track approval so this thing can get going again, because it's been kind of dormant lately?

The President. I appreciate that question. I'd love to have fast-track approval. I think it's going to be important to work with our neighbors to the south and Canada to the north, to promote free trade throughout the hemisphere.

I spoke to the Prime Minister of Canada this morning, and that subject came up, about the summit, upcoming summit. And so we're going to begin the process in Congress. Ambassador Zoellick will be working with Members of Congress to lay the groundwork for the ability for the President to have what they call fast-track negotiating authority.

Secondly, I look forward to my meeting with President Pastrana. I'm looking forward to the briefing that he'll be bringing from Colombia. And I, too, am worried about ever committing the United States military to an engagement in that part of the world. I know we're training, and that's fine, but the mission ought to be limited to just that. And so I share the concern of those who are worried that at some point in time the United States might become militarily engaged.

Now, in terms of the success of the mission, the President's going to bring me his firsthand account of what's taking place in the country. I am concerned about the amount of acreage in cultivation for the growth of coca leaves. We've got to do a better job of working with the Colombia Government on its eradication program.

I had a long talk about the Andes with President Fox. I'm convinced President Fox will be a stabilizing influence for that part of the world. Fortunately, we've got a good relationship so that he will share with me his insights as things develop. He has had meetings with Mr. Pastrana and Mr. Chavez, and I believe Vicente Fox is going to be a stabilizing influence and a positive influence on the Andes.

Jim [Jim Angle, Fox News].

China and Iraq

Q. Mr. President, on Iraq, what is your understanding of the Chinese presence in Iraq, especially with regard to constructing military facilities? And do you see anything that you see as a violation of U.N. sanctions?

The President. We're concerned about the Chinese presence in Iraq, and we are—my administration is sending the appropriate response to the Chinese. Yes, it's troubling that they'd be involved in helping Iraq develop a system that will endanger our pilots.

Q. That is what they're doing, sir, you're convinced that is——

The President. We think that may be the case. Let me just tell you this. It's risen to the level where we're going to send a message to the Chinese.

Let's see. Kelly Wallace [Cable News Network].

Q. Oh, I get a second one?

The President. Yes, Dick [John Dickerson, Time].

Presidential Pardons

Q. Mr. President, when you campaigned—I know you want to move forward on this question of pardons—but when you campaigned, you talked about the legacy of the sixties, where leaders didn't stand up and take their moral role and say something had been done wrong here. You want to move forward, but on the question of these pardons, do you feel there's any moral obligation, in terms of your office, to stand up and say to those who may be watching this, look, something has been done wrong here?

The President. I think the press corps will ferret out any wrongdoing. My job is to assure the American people that this administration will have the highest ethical

standards. And we're going to move forward. The President made decisions he made, and I made the decision in this White House to move forward. And we will.

Q. President Bush, given the questions that are being raised about the involvement of Senator Hillary Clinton's brother in the pardons process, what kind of guidance would you give members of your own politically active family in not only seeking pardons but seeking any other influence on any other issues with your administration?

The President. My guidance to them is, behave yourself. And they will.

Tax Relief Legislation

Q. Mr. President, to follow up on your answer on the tax question, perhaps looking at it the other way, some people are saying that perhaps it's too large a tax cut.

The President. Some are saying it's too small; some are saying it's too large; and I'm saying it's just right.

Q. But are you willing——

The President. Let him have another. I interrupted him.

Q. You were not willing to be flexible in terms of people who want to increase the size. Are you willing to be flexible with people who want to lower the size of your tax cut?

The President. I think it's just right. We've thought long and hard about the right number. This is a well-planned-out tax relief package that addresses the concerns of working Americans. It is needed. It is necessary. It will make a very positive difference in the lives of people who pay taxes, and our country can afford it.

There is a choice we have to make: Once we meet priorities, do we increase the size of the Government, or do we increase the amount of money in the pockets of the people who are working for a living? It is the right size, and it is the right time for tax relief in the country.

Bill [Bill Plante, CBS News]. And then you're next.

Q. And on that same subject——

The President. Yes, sir.

Q. ——your tax and budget package, how can you be sure that, as you put it, there will be money left over? All it would take would be a less-than-one-percentage-point drop in productivity for that out-year surplus to dwindle or maybe even vanish. And also, nobody, including Alan Greenspan, thinks that it would provide much of a current stimulus.

The President. First of all, I think given the choice between increasing the baselines of the budget, to the extent to which it had been increased the past, and passing money back to the people, I think Mr. Greenspan—not to put words in his mouth—but it seems like—why don't I just put some words in his mouth—[*laughter*]—it seems like what he said in his testimony is, he would rather see tax relief rather than increasing the size of the budgets beyond the needs of the country.

Secondly, I believe we can do a heck of a lot better in growing our economy than the basic assumptions in the 10-year plan. I believe that good monetary policy, good fiscal policy, good regulatory policy, good trade policy will enable our economy to grow beyond the scope that is envisioned in the current budget projections.

Secondly, I believe, as well, that if we don't pass some of the money back to the people that pay the bills, it is going to be spent. And I worry about a bloated Federal Government serving as a drag on economic growth.

Yes, sir.

Visit of United Kingdom Prime Minister Tony Blair

Q. Mr. President, Stephen Sackur of the BBC.

The President. Yes, sir.

Q. You have a meeting with Prime Minister Blair tomorrow.

The President. Correct.

Q. There are some concerns in this country about the European plan for what they

call a rapid-reaction force, their own military capability. What will you tell Prime Minister Blair about the American attitude to this rapid-reaction force?

The President. I, first, look forward to the visit. I'm anxious to meet the Prime Minister. We've had a couple of good conversations on the telephone. I'm thankful that he's coming across the—actually coming down from Canada—but coming across the sea to visit us. Laura and I are looking to having a private dinner with he and Mrs. Blair Friday night. We'll be having a press availability after our meeting, and——

Q. I know, but I think a lot of people would like to——

The President. Well, why don't we wait until after he and I visit so I don't have to give the same answer twice.

Q. But just on the whole outline of the question of the European defense capability——

The President. You bet. I understand, you're trying to get me to tell you the answer twice. [*Laughter*] Britain and the United States have got a special relationship. We'll keep it that way. I look forward to talking to the Prime Minister about the importance of NATO. It is—anyway, let me visit with him first. I promise to call upon you tomorrow. Nice try.

Yes, sir.

Federal Budget

Q. Mr. President, you've talked a lot about areas of the budget that are going to increase—education; today you talked about Medicare; you've talked before a little bit about defense. You haven't talked much about the areas where, to come in with a budget that's going to be responsible, you'll have to do some cuts.

The President. Yes.

Q. Where might we see you take the red pen to the budget?

The President. Let me remind you, and the people who are listening, that accounting in Washington is a little different than the way normal—I shouldn't say "normal people"—the average person accounts. This is a town where if you don't increase the budget by an expected number, it's considered a cut.

We're going to slow the rate of growth of the budget down. It should come to no surprise to anybody that my budget is going to say, loud and clear, that the rate of growth of the budget, for example, from last year, was excessive. And so we'll be slowing the rate of growth of the budgets down. That, evidently, is a cut. In my parlance, it's not a cut. When you increase spending, it's not a cut.

I will be glad to explain some of the slowdowns and some of the increases and perhaps a decrease or two after we put the budget out. Let me submit it on Tuesday, and then I'll be glad to answer any questions.

Thank you for this. I look forward to this—I look forward to future press conferences.

Q. Frequently? [*Laughter*]

The President. Well, yes, of course. [*Laughter*]

Q. Once a week?

The President. Well, you don't want to see me once a week. You'll run out of questions.

Q. Twice a week?

The President. Oh, twice? [*Laughter*] I'll be running out of ties. [*Laughter*]

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 2:40 p.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Judge William Webster, former Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, who was selected to lead the investigation of Special Agent Robert Hanssen; President Vladimir Putin and Minister of Foreign Affairs Igor Ivanov of Russia; President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada; U.S. Trade Representative Robert B. Zoellick; President Andres Pastrana of Colombia; President Vicente Fox of Mexico; President

Hugo Chavez of Venezuela; and Cherie Blair, wife of Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom. Reporters referred to Roger Clinton, brother of Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Statement on the Death of Dale Earnhardt
February 22, 2001

I have asked my close friend Joe Allbaugh to attend today's memorial service for Dale Earnhardt. I am saddened by the untimely loss of this American legend and want to express my deepest sympathy to his family, friends, and fans. Dale was an American icon who made great contributions to his sport. Dale's legacy will live on for millions of Americans. He was an inspiration to many.

Remarks Following a Meeting With the Budget Review Board and an Exchange With Reporters
February 23, 2001

The President. Good morning. Welcome to the Budget Review Board. We've been going over the budget that I'll be submitting to the Congress next Tuesday night. I want to thank OMB Director Mitch Daniels for doing a really fine job.

It is a budget that clearly sets out priorities. It is a budget that sets aside Social Security money for only—to be used only for Social Security. It is a budget that will substantially pay down debt, and it's a budget that provides meaningful, real tax relief for our citizens.

In the budget, I prioritize education. I talked about that yesterday. We also prioritize the health care needs. We recognize the Federal Government plays a very important role in researching cures for disease, and therefore, our budget increases the NIH budget for 2002 by $2.8 billion, the largest increase in that Department's history.

And so I'm very much looking forward for the American people to see and hear the budget presentation. It's a practical budget. It makes a lot of sense. It meets a lot of needs. And the people of this country are going to realize we spent a lot of time on it and will realize that they've got an administration that is practical, full of common sense, and always asks the question, how can we help the people of the country?

Thanks.

National Economy

Q. Is the uptick in inflation going to make it harder to get the economy going again?

The President. Not with the Secretary of the Treasury at the helm.

Thanks a lot.

Major League Baseball Opening Day

Q. Are you going to Puerto Rico to see the Rangers?

The President. Are you?

Q. I'd like to.

The President. I'm not putting out my opening day plans yet.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:25 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom at Camp David, Maryland
February 23, 2001

Q. How is it going so far?

President Bush. Pretty darn good.

Q. How was lunch? Is it true that Churchill once came to this cabin?

President Bush. That's exactly right.

Q. How goes the get-acquainted session?

President Bush. Good, John [John Roberts, CBS News], thank you. "Ambassador" Johndroe was telling us where to go.

Q. Sir, can you tell us the historical significance of where you're standing?

President Bush. This is where Prime Minister Winston Churchill, the first visitor to Camp David, stayed. It's a huge honor for Laura and me to welcome the current Prime Minister and his wife. And we're about to have a press availability to answer all these difficult questions that you're throwing at us, John. I promised the Prime Minister that you in particular would behave well during the press conference—and Fournier [Ron Fournier, Associated Press].

All right, we're actually now going to go for a walk of a couple miles.

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, where's your coat?

Prime Minister Blair. It's around somewhere, but actually it's a lot warmer than Canada.

President Bush. You shouldn't have noticed that.

NOTE: The exchange began at 3:23 p.m. on the porch of Holly Lodge. In his remarks, the President referred to Assistant Press Secretary Gordon Johndroe and Prime Minister Blair's wife, Cherie. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom at Camp David
February 23, 2001

President Bush. Welcome. It's my honor to welcome the Prime Minister, from our strongest friend and closest ally, to Camp David. We've had a couple of formal visits. More importantly, we had a nice walk around Camp David and got to know each other. And as they told me, he's a pretty charming guy. He put the charm offensive on me. [*Laughter*] And it worked. No, we're delighted, and tonight we'll have a dinner, just the four of us—Mrs. Blair and Laura and the two of us—and I'm really looking forward to it.

This is a chance for me to tell the Prime Minister how dedicated my administration will be to an alliance that has made a huge difference in the world, an alliance that I firmly believe will make a difference in the years to come.

We discussed trade. We discussed defenses. We discussed the Prime Minister's vision of a strong NATO. We discussed a lot of subjects. The thing I want to leave people with the impression of is that ours will be a strong and good personal relationship and a alliance that will stand the test of time.

Mr. Prime Minister, welcome.

Prime Minister Blair. Thank you very much, Mr. President. Well, I was delighted to come here, and I've been really enthusiastic about our meetings so far. They've been absolutely excellent, very productive, as I hoped and expected. We discussed a whole range of issues. I think we've been through all the issues that you would expect, plus some more. And I've found it a very, very useful meeting, indeed.

And I just want to make one point by way of introduction, which is that our countries have stood together in some very difficult times, very hard times, some of the most testing times the world has ever known. And the reason we've come through those times together and stronger is because we share the same values; we share the same interests; we have a lot of common history; but I think, most of all, we have the same perception of the world and the belief in freedom and the belief in standing up for what is right and just. And everything that I've heard today confirms for me, in my view, that that relationship will carry on and strengthen in the years to come.

I thank you very much, indeed.

President Bush. Thank you, Mr. Prime Minister.

Fournier [Ron Fournier, Associated Press].

National Missile Defense

Q. Mr. President, have you received a commitment from the Prime Minister to support your missile defense plan, including building missile defense sites in Britain?

And Mr. Prime Minister, do you think that there is a threat that requires a missile defense shield, and would you allow missile defense sites to be built on your—in your country?

President Bush. Mr. Prime Minister, before we answer that, generally when I ask for one question, we only get one question coming. Well done. [*Laughter*]

We had a long discussion about missile defense. I will, obviously, let the Prime Minister speak for himself. I made the case, like I will do to all the leaders with whom I meet, that we need to think differently about the post-cold-war era, that there are new threats that face people who love freedom.

There is the threat of an accidental launch of a missile. There are the threats of potential blackmail when one of these nations develops weapons of mass destruction and be willing to point at America, Britain, our allies, our friends, people with whom we've got commitments. And we've got to deal with those in a realistic way. And the Prime Minister asked a lot of really good questions, and he can answer what you asked, Ron.

But we're in the process of coming up with a realistic way to deal with the true threats. It makes a lot of sense to explore options. It makes a lot of sense to develop defenses to face the true threats. It also makes sense for us to send the message to the world that in the post-cold-war era, the United States will handle its responsibilities to keep the peace in a constructive way, by reducing our offensive weapons, as well. And I'm now talking to the Pentagon to come up with a level of nuclear weaponry that will help us keep the peace. As to whether or not there will be sites or no sites, that's too early to determine, because I have yet to propose to the Prime Minister what will work.

Prime Minister Blair. First of all, let me say, I understand and share the concerns of the President and the American administration about weapons of mass destruction and nuclear proliferation. And I think it's

very important in that context that we discuss all the ways that we can deal with this threat, which is a real threat and a present threat, both in relation to offensive and defensive systems.

And I said to the President, and I want to repeat to you, that I welcome very much the approach that the administration has taken, which is to be very open about this, which is to talk to people about it, to make sure that allies are consulted properly. These are very, very big and important issues. But we welcome the dialog that there has been on it. And I think if you look at the world today and you see those countries that are developing weapons of mass destruction, I think it is a debate that it is right to have.

Q. Can I ask you both about missile defense? Mr. President, can I ask you, if you fail to get agreement among your key allies, including Britain, are you prepared then to go ahead alone with some form of missile defense system? And if I can ask the Prime Minister, are you prepared to say in principle now you could back an American missile defense system?

President Bush. I don't think I'm going to fail to persuade people. I think it makes—it's commonsensical to say to our friends, let's come together, work together, to develop a defense against the true threats of the 21st century. And so, I don't accept your hypothesis.

Prime Minister Blair. Well, I'm sure, for my part, that this is a debate that is important to have, for the very reasons that the President gave earlier. And I think if you look at the weapons of mass destruction that people are trying to develop in nuclear proliferation, that it's important that we look at every single way we possibly can of dealing with this threat.

Now, as the President said a moment or two ago, we don't have a specific proposal on the table yet. But I understand and share the American concerns, as I've said many times before. And I think what is important is that if we take this forward in a constructive way and have the right discussion with allies, then we can find a way through this. I've always believed that, incidentally, and I believe that even more firmly having talked to the President today.

President Bush. I'll give you a followup answer.

I thought it interesting that Mr. Putin talked about missile defenses. I know there are some concerns in Europe about Russian reaction to the development of defenses that will make the world more peaceful. And Mr. Putin has started talking about the need for folks to develop—think about developing systems that will intercept missiles on launch, for example, theater-based systems that will keep the peace. We found that to be a breakthrough of sorts, a recognition that the cold war has passed, that we are not Russia's enemy—I don't view Russia as our enemy, either—and that there will be new threats that we have to deal with. If we are peaceful, loving people, we must use our technologies to appropriately deal with the threats that we'll be facing. And I thought that was a positive breakthrough.

Steve Holland [Reuters].

Situation in Iraq

Q. Yes, sir. Could both of you explain how you keep the Iraqi sanctions from crumbling, and how do you explain how the Iraqi sanctions could be reconstituted to keep them from—to help ease the strain on the Iraqi people?

President Bush. We spent a lot of time talking about our mutual interests in Iraq and the Persian Gulf, and from our perspective, as you know, I made the famous statement that our sanctions are like Swiss cheese. That means they're not very effective, and we're going to work together to figure out a way to make them more effective.

But I think the Prime Minister and I both recognize that it is going to be important for us to build a consensus in the

region to make the sanctions more effective. Colin Powell left today, after lunch, to move around the Middle East, collect thoughts and to listen, with a policy of strengthening our mission to make it clear to Saddam Hussein that he shall not terrorize his neighbors and not develop weapons of mass destruction.

Prime Minister Blair. Yes, if I can just add to that, I think that—I mean, of course, we've looked the whole time to see how we can make sanctions more effective. But don't be under any doubt at all of our absolute determination to make sure that the threat of Saddam Hussein is contained and that he is not able to develop these weapons of mass destruction that he wishes to do.

And as I constantly point out to people, I mean, this is a man with a record on these issues, both in respect to the murder of thousands of his own people, in respect to the war against Iran, in respect to the annexation of Kuwait. And we know perfectly well, given the chance, he will develop these weapons of mass destruction. Indeed, he's trying to do so and will get as much technology as he can to do so.

Now, of course, we've got to—we're all conscious of the fact that our quarrel is not with the Iraqi people, who in many ways suffer under the yoke of Saddam Hussein. But—and therefore, it's important that we make sure that the sanctions hit him, Saddam, as effectively as they possibly can. But we need to contain that threat, and that's why the action that we took is right and justified.

President Bush. BBC guy [Stephen Sackur, BBC], as promised.

European Rapid-Reaction Force

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. If I can pick up on what we were discussing yesterday, now that you've had a chance to talk to the Prime Minister, do you share the concerns of many in your party that the European plan for a rapid-reaction military force could seriously undermine NATO? And I'd like to hear first your response and then the Prime Minister's.

President Bush. The Prime Minister and I spent a lot of time on this subject, as well, and I support his point of view. He assured me that NATO is going to be the primary way to keep the peace in Europe and that the United States—and I assured him the United States will be actively engaged in NATO, remain engaged in Europe with our Allies.

But he also assured me that the European defense would no way undermine NATO. He also assured me that there would be a joint command, that planning would take place within NATO, and that should all NATO not wish to go on a mission, that would then serve as a catalyst for the defense forces moving on their own.

And finally, I was very hopeful when we discussed the Prime Minister's vision, that such a vision would encourage our NATO allies and friends to bolster their defense budgets, perhaps. And so I support what the Prime Minister has laid out. I think it makes a lot of sense for our country.

Prime Minister Blair. Well, I was very grateful for what the President had to say on that issue. And the important thing to remember is that, as the President has just outlined to you, this is in circumstances where NATO as a whole chooses not to be engaged. It is limited to the peacekeeping and humanitarian tasks that are set out. It is not a standing army. It is a capability that Europe should have, but the sovereign decision of each nation is necessary for each operation.

And speaking together as the founders of NATO, we would never do anything to undermine NATO. But where NATO as a whole chooses not to be engaged, it is important that we have the capability, where it's right and within these limited tasks that I've set out, to be able to act, should we choose to do so ourselves.

And I think, done in that way, it is something that can strengthen NATO, give us

an additional string to our bow in circumstances where NATO doesn't want to be involved. And I think the President is absolutely right in a sense to put it up to us in Europe and say, "Well, if we are going to do this, then let us make sure that our capabilities match our aspirations." And I think done in that way it is good not just for Europe, but it's good for NATO and the U.S., as well. And I think that the discussion we had on it was very useful and very constructive.

Bush-Blair Relationship

Q. How much an obstacle is it to this special relationship you say you want to have on behalf of your two countries that you are ideologically poles apart? A tax cutter versus a tax raiser; a pro-death-penalty versus an anti-death-penalty; America first versus an interventionist—[*inaudible*]——

President Bush. [*Inaudible*]—you shouldn't be slandering in that way. [*Laughter*] He can handle his politics in Britain, and I'll handle mine in America. But we've got a lot of common interests. We agree on trade. We agree on ways to keep the peace. But most important, both of us recognize that this is a special relationship, the relationship between America and Britain, and we're going to keep it that way.

It is—the Prime Minister referred to the great history of the relationship between our two countries, and this is a fantastic legacy for both of us to inherit. And it's a legacy I take seriously, and it's a legacy that I will work hard to protect. I can assure you that when either of us get in a bind, there will be a friend on the other end of the phone.

Prime Minister Blair. Well, I endorse that completely. And I think it's important to recognize, as well—I mean, you know from the work that we do in Europe, as well, there are very strong alliances that can be formed with people across so-called ideological divides of that type. But I think what is important is that what we have in common, our two countries and our interests, are so much more important for us in the work that we do.

And I should say also that I don't think if you look at the problems that are on the President's agenda, even his domestic agenda now in terms of the economy, in terms of some of the things—we actually had a brief conversation about education policy when we were on our walk together—I think there are some interesting things happening that—there's a good dialog on some of these things, too. So I'm sorry to disappoint you.

President Bush. John [John King, Cable News Network].

China and Iraq

Q. Mr. President, you spoke yesterday about sending a message to China if it is proven that the Chinese Government was helping the Iraqis at those missile sites—the air defense sites, excuse me. Mr. Prime Minister, I'm interested in what British intelligence tells you about any Chinese involvement, and if Chinese involvement is proven, what specific steps are each of you prepared to take, beyond just publicly voicing your displeasure?

President Bush. If I can answer that first, because we had a little bit of news today that the Chinese responded to our inquiry. And you're going to have to ask Condi Rice what specifically they said, but if I could paraphrase, it was: If this is the case, we'll remedy the situation. But we did get a response. As I told you yesterday, that we filed a complaint, and they responded this morning.

Q. Do you trust that they will keep their word in that regard?

President Bush. I think you've always got to begin with trust until proven otherwise.

Mr. Prime Minister, you may want to——

Prime Minister Blair. I've got nothing to add to that, actually. I think that's the sensible approach, and it's the one we took, too.

President Clinton's Pardons

Q. Prime Minister, having stood squarely behind President Clinton for the last 4 years, through thick and thin, do you feel any embarrassment today on his behalf, as his Presidency clearly ended in scandal and sleaze?

Prime Minister Blair. You know, Trevor, as I've said over the last few days when I've been asked about this, Bill Clinton is a friend of mine and will remain a friend of mine. But I am not getting into what has been in the newspapers and media over here. I don't think it's appropriate for me; I don't think it's right.

President Bush. Campbell [Campbell Brown, NBC News].

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, your administration has yet to become actively engaged in the peacemaking process, particularly in Northern Ireland. Are you planning to become more engaged?

And Mr. Prime Minister, based on what you've observed so far, do you expect that President Bush will be as engaged as President Clinton?

President Bush. Well, we talked about the peace process. And I, like I did in the campaign, want to again praise President Clinton for his involvement. I asked the Prime Minister, "Did the President have a positive effect?" He said, "Absolutely." I then asked for him to let me know if I could ever help.

As you know, our position on any peace process is, it takes willing parties to come together, and if there is a way that I can help, I'd be more than willing to do so. I'm going to wait to be asked by the Prime Minister. He's got a better handle on it than I conceivably could, as to when and if the prestige of the United States is needed to make the process work better.

But we spent a lot of time discussing the issue. The Prime Minister deserves a lot of credit, as well, for working hard to bring a peace to Northern Ireland. And progress is being made, and we will—I will be standing by, anxious to help, if I'm needed.

Prime Minister Blair. Well, I was very grateful for that offer by the President. And it's difficult to perceive the exact circumstances in which I might pick up the phone and ask the President to help. But the fact that I know he is there and willing to do that is very important, because President Clinton was a great assistance during difficult parts of the Northern Ireland peace process.

And it's a very difficult process. I mean, it goes on the whole time, and we make progress, day by day, week by week, month by month, and there are still some very, very tricky issues to sort out. So I can't exactly foresee the circumstances in which the American President can come in and be of help, but I was very grateful for the offer of that. And I think people in Northern Ireland will be, as well, because whatever the difficulties of the process there, my goodness, Northern Ireland is a different place today from what it was a few years back. And for people to know that there is that interest in the outside world, for people in Northern Ireland to know that, it gives them tremendous heart and hope.

Yes.

Bush-Blair Relationship

Q. A question for both of you. There has been a lot said about how different you are as people. Have you already in your talks found something maybe that you—some personal interest that you have in common, maybe in religion or sport or music?

President Bush. Well, we both use Colgate toothpaste. [*Laughter*]

Prime Minister Blair. They're going to wonder how you know that, George. [*Laughter*]

Q. I also wanted to ask you—you come up with a lot of nicknames for people. I

wondered if you already had one for the Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Blair. Well, I'm getting even embarrassed about all the ones I choose in this press conference. [*Laughter*]

President Bush. I'm still open for suggestions.

Well, we like sports. The Prime Minister informed me this morning that he exercised at the gym prior to meeting Vice President Cheney. I informed him after this press conference, I'm going to go exercise in the gym. We've both got great wives. I think probably the place we're going to find a lot of common ground is we're both dads, and proudly so, and recognize that as our most important responsibility—is to be loving dads.

I don't know if you found any common ground or not. [*Laughter*]

Prime Minister Blair. I think that's enough to be going on with.

President Bush. Jim [Jim Angle, Fox News].

Sanctions Against Iraq

Q. Mr. President, you talked about Secretary of State Powell going to the Middle East looking for consensus on how to handle Saddam Hussein. We do know that there is a consensus that sanctions hurt the people of Iraq too much and perhaps Saddam Hussein not enough. Did the two of you discuss ways of changing the sanctions to make them tougher on him and a little less punishing for the people of Iraq? And if not, how do you hope to keep the coalition together? You already have some NATO Allies, even, who are questioning the value of the sanctions.

President Bush. Well, that's the work we've got to do. First, our beef is not with the people of Iraq; it's with Saddam Hussein. And secondly, any time anybody suffers in Iraq, we're concerned about it. And I would, however, remind you that Saddam's got a lot of oil money, and it would be helpful if he would apply it to helping his people. Having said that, to the extent that sanctions are hurting the Iraqi people, we're going to analyze that.

Colin is really going to listen. He's going to solicit opinion from our friends and folks in the Middle East. And prior to the formulation of any policy, we will have listened, and then I will, of course, consult with friends and allies such as the Prime Minister here, as we develop a policy that we hope and know will be more realistic.

The Prime Minister said something interesting, though. A change in sanctions should not in any way, shape, or form, embolden Saddam Hussein. He has got to understand that we are going to watch him carefully, and if we catch him developing weapons of mass destruction, we'll take the appropriate action. And if we catch him threatening his neighbors, we will take the appropriate action. A change in the sanction regime that is not working should not be any kind of signal whatsoever to him that he should cross any line of—and test our will, because we're absolutely determined to make that part of the world a more peaceful place by keeping this guy in check.

Q. Thank you very much.

President Bush. See you at the gym.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 4:45 p.m. in the Green Top Camp Dining Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Blair's wife, Cherie; President Vladimir Putin of Russia; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Joint Statement With Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom
February 23, 2001

President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Tony Blair reaffirm the uniquely close relationship that exists between the United States and the United Kingdom: a relationship rooted in common history, common values and common interests around the globe. We commit ourselves to the shared goals of a stronger Transatlantic alliance and to helping build a Europe whole, free and secure.

We affirm that NATO will remain the essential foundation of Transatlantic security. In this new century, NATO will continue to adapt itself to meet new missions and challenges by strengthening its capabilities; seeking to reinforce cooperation with Russia, Ukraine and other members of the Partnership for Peace; and continuing to admit to its ranks European democracies prepared to assume the responsibilities of membership.

We support efforts of NATO's European Members and other European nations to assume greater responsibility for crisis management in Europe by strengthening NATO's capabilities and developing the ability to manage efforts where NATO as a whole chooses not to engage. In this regard, the United States welcomes the European Union's European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP), intended to make Europe a stronger, more capable partner in deterring and managing crises affecting the security of the Transatlantic community. The United Kingdom is committed to taking ESDP forward on the basis agreed by the EU at the recent Nice summit. This involves:

– Working with other EU members to establish and provide resources for an ESDP that improves Europe's capabilities and enables the EU to act where NATO as a whole is not engaged;

– Developing EU capabilities in a manner that is fully coordinated, compatible and transparent with NATO;

– Providing for the fullest possible participation of non-EU European Allies in the consideration of execution of EU-led operations, reflecting their shared interests and security commitments as NATO members.

The United States supports these efforts and welcomes the progress made toward our shared goals.

We reaffirm our commitment to promoting peace and stability in the Balkans. We declare our intent to work together and with our partners in the European Union and beyond to consolidate the peace so recently won. Our common vision is of a region, fully embedded in Europe, where commerce supplants conflict, where borders are venues for cooperation and not reasons for conflagration, and where the rule of law prevails and war criminals are brought to justice. Our two countries are committed to NATO-led military operations in the region and agree to work with allies and partners to build a region where the democratic leaders themselves take on the responsibility for implementing the peace, enabling the progressive drawdown of international military forces and in due course of the international civilian organizations.

We recognize the existence of a common threat stemming from the growing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and increasingly sophisticated missiles for their delivery. We are already working together in this area, and agree on the need for further substantive bilateral consultations, as well as close consultations with other allies. This consultation process, which will involve contacts with other interested parties, will include a review of our common strategic assumptions so that they reflect the contemporary security setting, and especially the growing threat from

WMD-armed adversaries in regions of vital interest. We need to obstruct and deter these new threats with a strategy that encompasses both offensive and defensive systems, continues nuclear arms reductions where possible, and strengthens WMD and missile proliferation controls and counterproliferation measures.

We reaffirm our determination to oppose the development or use of WMD and ballistic missiles by Saddam Hussein and the threat his regime poses to its neighbors, while seeking to protect the Iraqi people from the brutality of Saddam Hussein and his indifference to their humanitarian needs. We call on Iraq to comply with relevant UN Security Council Resolutions.

In the wake of the verdict issued by the Scottish High Court at Camp Zeist on January 31, we reiterate our condolences to the families of the victims of Pan Am flight 103, and call on the Libyan government to comply with the requirements of relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

The President pledges the continuing support of the United States for the Northern Ireland peace process. The Prime Minister welcomes that support.

We are both committed to taking advantage of the new possibilities for democratic development and free markets in Africa in order to address the problems of insecurity and poverty on the continent. We support the idea of a new partnership with Africa to address, in a systematic way, conflict and disease—especially HIV/AIDS—and to promote economic growth and good governance. It is in all of our interests to create a more stable and peaceful world and to make available the benefits of globalization to all peoples.

We recognize the depth of our nations' economic connection and the United Kingdom acknowledges the importance to European economies of measures designed to sustain economic growth in the United States. We commit to work together and with other European states to deepen Transatlantic economic relations and to seek solutions to trade disputes. To maintain support for the WTO, we recognize that it is important that we work for solutions to trade disputes which are in accordance with its rulings. We reaffirm our commitment to the multilateral trading system and strongly support the launch of a new Round of global trade negotiations this year. It is our goal to open markets, both regionally and globally. We agree to intensify our efforts to liberalize fully our bilateral civil aviation relationship. We reaffirm our commitment to increased cooperation in the sphere of Transatlantic defense trade and the removal of unnecessary governmental barriers and impediments to such trade.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

The President's Radio Address
February 24, 2001

Good morning. This coming week I will be making the trip up Pennsylvania Avenue to address a joint session of Congress. We have some business to attend to called the budget of the United States.

The Federal budget is a document about the size of a big city phone book and about as hard to read from cover to cover. The blueprint I submit this week contains many numbers, but there is one that probably counts more than any other: $5.6 trillion. That is the surplus the Federal Government expects to collect over the next 10 years, money left over after we have met

our obligations to Social Security, Medicare, health care, education, defense, and other priorities.

The plan I submit will fund our highest national priorities. Education gets the biggest percentage increase of any Department in our Federal Government. We won't just spend more money on schools and education; we will spend it responsibly. We'll give States more freedom to decide what works. And as we give more to our schools, we're going to expect more in return by requiring States and local jurisdictions to test every year. How else can we know whether schools are teaching and children are learning?

Social Security and Medicare will get every dollar they need to meet their commitments. And every dollar of Social Security and Medicare tax revenue will be reserved for Social Security and Medicare.

My budget blueprint will restrain spending, yet meet growing needs with a reasonable 4 percent growth rate, which is a little more than inflation. After paying the bills, my plan reduces the national debt, and fast—so fast, in fact, that economists worry that we're going to run out of debt to retire. That would be a good worry to have.

Finally, along with funding our priorities and paying down debt, my plan returns about one out of every four dollars of the surplus to the American taxpayers, who created the surplus in the first place. A surplus in tax revenue, after all, means that taxpayers have been overcharged. And usually when you've been overcharged, you expect to get something back.

Tax relief means real help for both American families and the American economy. Everybody who pays income taxes will receive a tax cut. Nobody will be targeted in, and nobody will be targeted out. The typical family will get about $1,600 in tax relief, and that's real money. And that's money that will help American families manage their own accounts, manage your own balance sheets.

My address to Congress comes on Tuesday night at 9 o'clock eastern time. I hope you'll tune in and consider what I have to say. I hope you'll agree that my plan is good for you and for your family. But even more, I hope you'll agree it's good for America.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9:30 a.m. on February 23 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on February 24. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 23 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks at the National Governors' Association Conference
February 26, 2001

It's good to see you all again. I hope everybody had as fun a time last night as Laura and I did. It was—I really enjoyed it, and thanks for coming.

When the history of this administration is written, it will be said the Nation's Governors had a faithful friend in the White House. I've sat where you're sitting, and I know what it's like to have a good idea and then to wait on the Federal Government to tell you whether you can try it or not.

So let me make this pledge to you all: I'm going to make respect for federalism a priority in this administration. Respect for federalism begins with an understanding of its philosophy. The Framers of the Constitution did not believe in an all-knowing, all-powerful Federal Government. They believed that our freedom is best preserved

when power is dispersed. That is why they limited and enumerated the Federal Government's powers and reserved the remaining functions of government to the States.

And today I'm announcing a new federalism initiative. I will sign a directive creating an Interagency Working Group on Federalism. The Working Group will seek your opinions on the issues that Governors and other leaders in local and State government believe should be addressed. The Group will look for ways to speed up waivers and to streamline rigid rules and regulations. And it will be charged with drafting a new Executive order on federalism, which will require the departments and agencies to respect the rights of our States and territories.

We look forward to a close relationship. You've got strong advocates in my administration, starting with four former Governors, Ashcroft, Thompson, Whitman, and Bush. [*Laughter*] We'll also have an Intergovernmental Affairs Office run by Ruben Barrales of California, who will be responsive to your needs and your requests.

We've just lived through a decade of the most exciting, important things done by government have been done by Governors. In 7 years, you've reduced welfare rolls by more than half, improved millions of the lives of your fellow citizens by helping them find work. You brought new meaning to crime prevention programs. You pioneered education reforms, and many of you have shown how tax relief can reenergize State economies.

In Michigan and Massachusetts, New Jersey and New York, for example, tax relief pumped adrenalin into troubled economies. I saw the same thing happen in Texas when I proposed, fought for, and signed meaningful tax relief.

More than half the States have reduced taxes in each and every one of the past 3 years. Governors deserve more credit than you get when it comes to the prosperity of our country. The surging growth we've seen in States that have reduced taxes gives an answer to the people who say we cannot afford tax cuts. You've shown we can't afford not to cut taxes.

I look forward to this discussion today to discuss how best to devolve authority back to the States. Real change comes from the bottom up, not the top down. The genius of the American system has been to let that change flow upward, from neighborhoods to cities to States and then to the Federal Government. We need to keep that path open, to give Government a human face and bring decisionmaking closer to the people. I am going to rely upon my friends, the Governors.

I look forward to being in constant contact with you. You see, you bring common sense to the political debate. You're dedicated servants. You respect the will of the people. Our country is better off for your service.

Governor Glendening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:55 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Parris N. Glendening of Maryland, chair, National Governors' Association (NGA). The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Governor Glendening and Gov. John Engler of Michigan, vice chair, NGA.

Memorandum on the Interagency Working Group on Federalism
February 26, 2001

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Interagency Working Group on Federalism

It is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Establishment. There is established the Interagency Working Group on Federalism (the "Working Group").

Section 2. Membership.

(a) The Working Group shall comprise the following officials:

(1) Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy, who shall serve as Chairman of the Working Group;
(2) Director, Domestic Policy Council, who shall serve as Vice Chairman of the Working Group;
(3) Secretary of the Treasury, or an appropriate designee thereof;
(4) Attorney General, or an appropriate designee thereof;
(5) Secretary of the Interior, or an appropriate designee thereof;
(6) Secretary of Agriculture, or an appropriate designee thereof;
(7) Secretary of Commerce, or an appropriate designee thereof;
(8) Secretary of Labor, or an appropriate designee thereof;
(9) Secretary of Health and Human Services, or an appropriate designee thereof;
(10) Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, or an appropriate designee thereof;
(11) Secretary of Transportation, or an appropriate designee thereof;
(12) Secretary of Energy, or an appropriate designee thereof;
(13) Secretary of Education, or an appropriate designee thereof;
(14) Secretary of Veterans Affairs, or an appropriate designee thereof;
(15) Director of the Office of Management and Budget, or an appropriate designee thereof;
(16) Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, or an appropriate designee thereof;
(17) Counsel to the President;
(18) Assistant to the President for Economic Policy;
(19) Assistant to the President, Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, or an appropriate designee thereof;
(20) Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff to the Vice President, or an appropriate designee thereof;
(21) Deputy Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Affairs; and
(22) Such other officials of executive departments and agencies as the President may, from time to time, designate.

Section 2. Meetings of the Working Group. The Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy or the Director, Domestic Policy Council, may convene and preside over meetings of the Working Group.

Section 3. Functions. The principal functions of the Working Group are to:

(a) Identify initiatives that promote principles of Federalism, such as:

(1) Federal endeavors which may more appropriately be carried out by State or local authorities;
(2) Opportunities for flexible funding streams, regulatory waivers, and other opportunities that increase State and local flexibility, innovation, and accountability;
(3) Measures for improving Federal responsiveness to State and local concerns; and
(4) Enforcement of rules, orders, and procedures that advance Federalism.

(b) Draft a new Executive Order on Federalism, which will require departments and agencies in the executive branch to adhere to principles of Federalism;

(c) Consult, as appropriate, with State and local officials on issues pertaining to Federalism, including, but not limited to, the issuance of the new Executive Order on Federalism; and

(d) Produce a report to the President on recommendations for promoting principles of Federalism no later than 6 months after the issuance of this directive.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Remarks Prior to a Cabinet Meeting and an Exchange With Reporters
February 26, 2001

The President. I want to thank our Cabinet for coming in today. Amongst a variety of topics, one of which is going to be—we're going to talk about the budget and my speech tomorrow night to the Congress. And I want to thank all of the Cabinet officers for their hard work in helping us prepare a realistic budget that is going to enable our Nation to meet its priorities and at the same time not only set aside money for contingencies and pay down debt but to leave enough money left over so that people can get a real, substantial tax relief package that they will feel.

I would be glad to answer some questions.

Upcoming Address to Congress

Q. Mr. President, in your speech tomorrow night, what will be your message to the American people, and will you begin addressing reforms in the Social Security system?

The President. Of course, we'll be talking about Social Security. Secondly, I will be making the case as to why our budget makes sense for the country and for the people who pay the bills of our country. It is a commonsense approach to what our Nation ought to do with the tax revenues that are coming into the Treasury.

Q. Do you expect to propose Social Security reforms this year?

The President. I will see.

Miami Herald's Florida Vote Recount

Q. Mr. President, what are your thoughts about the final Florida recount that put you over from the Vice President, and what do you say to those who now have to call you the legitimate President that didn't call you that? [*Laughter*]

The President. Good. [*Laughter*] Hopefully, all the focus on the past is over with. It's time to move forward. And tomorrow night's speech is a part of moving forward. We've worked hard here in this administration to reach out to people that may not have supported me. I think we're making pretty good progress to say that the discussions that take place around this table, for example, are what's best for America, not what's best for a political party but what's best for the country.

Upcoming Address to Congress

Q. Sir, in your speech, will you have specific areas in the budget where spending will slow down, and will you specify those areas in your speech?

The President. No. In my speech I will talk about the budget. And in the budget is where people will see all the particulars. If I tried to review every particular in the budget, I would set the all-time record for the amount of time in front of the Congress. And as you know, I'm the kind of person who likes to try to get to the point. I will spend enough time speaking so that

people will understand where I'm coming from but not too long so they go to sleep.

Q. Mr. President, you've acknowledged that you're going to have to make cuts to the budget to some extent. What do you say to those who are saying that you're telling the American people, essentially, they can have their cake and eat it, too?

The President. What I'm going to say to the American people is that, had we kept spending at the rate we were spending last year, there would be no surplus, that the size of growth in the Federal budget that—and the budget we inherited was way too high, that we can meet our needs by slowing down the rate of growth in our budget. But it requires a President to set priorities. And I'm going to set clear priorities in the budget.

I readily concede some appropriators may not like the fact that we're asking for there to be fiscal sanity in the Federal budget, but that's one of the reasons I became the President, because I said, "Give us a chance, and we will have fiscal sanity in our budget." And I'll look forward to making the case.

The people are going to hear in plain spoken words why I believe, strongly believe, when we meet priorities, pay down debt, protect Social Security, and as importantly, make sure that people get some of their own money back so to make sure that the economy is strong, help people pay for high energy bills, to help people manage their own personal debt, we need to have tax relief—tax relief that the people can feel. And I will make the case tomorrow night that it's within our grasp to do so. And people will hear as plainly as I can say it what the facts are.

Q. It sounds like your speech will be shorter than ones we're used to in the last 8 years. [*Laughter*]

The President. I don't know. [*Laughter*] It depends on how loud you clap.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:07 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization
February 26, 2001

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I transmit herewith the 6-month report required under the heading "International Organizations and Programs" in title IV of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Act, 1996 (Public Law 104–107), relating to the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization. The report, which was prepared by the previous Administration, covers the period from August 13, 2000, through January 27, 2001.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Ted Stevens, chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations, and C.W. Bill Young, chairman, House Committee on Appropriations.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Andres Pastrana of Colombia and an Exchange With Reporters
February 27, 2001

President Bush. It's my honor to welcome a friend of our country to the Oval Office, President Pastrana. We've had a very good discussion about Colombia, Plan Colombia, the renewal of a Trade Preference Act for the Andean nations to help their economies grow. President Pastrana is a courageous leader who is dealing with very difficult problems. I'm confident that with his leadership, his nation will be better off.

And Mr. President, I can't thank you enough for taking a lead in your country, for having the heart that you have and the compassion for the Colombian people, and the ability to make tough decisions.

I explained to the President that we're fully aware of the narcotics that are manufactured in his country but also told him that many of them wouldn't be manufactured if our Nation didn't use them, and we've got to work together to not only help Colombia but help our own country.

So, Mr. President, you're welcome to come—if you'd like to make a few comments, you're welcome to.

President Pastrana. Thank you, Mr. President. Once again, it is a great pleasure to be back with now-President Bush. We had the opportunity to meet in 1999 when President Bush was Governor. So once again, Mr. President, thank you for this opportunity in which we could exchange a lot of ideas of what's happening in our country, and how can we deal with a common enemy that is narcotrafficking; that in the end, that is the one that is financing the violence in my country and maybe also in part of your country; and that we are going to put all the efforts to continue our fight, as we have done in our commitment against narcotrafficking, trying to reach a peace agreement in our country and strengthening our economy, creating new jobs and better jobs for our people.

So I want to thank you publicly, also, Mr. President, for all the help that you are giving us and the U.S. to get forward in this process.

Thank you very much.

President Bush. A couple questions.

Colombia

Q. Mr. President, would you be part of the negotiation table—will the U.S. be part of the negotiation table as President Pastrana——

President Bush. No, we will not be.

Q. Why?

President Bush. This is an issue that the Colombian people and the Colombian President can deal with. We'll be glad to help Colombia in any way to make the peace. We'll be glad to help the Colombian economy through trade. But I won't be present for the discussions.

National Debt/Social Security

Q. Mr. President, on the budget, your chief economic adviser is saying that your administration will not seek to retire all of the outstanding Federal debt, which is something that President Clinton had promised. Can you explain why that is——

President Bush. Yes.

Q. ——and what you would suggest doing with the hundreds of billions of dollars that would be left over in the Social Security surplus that would have gone to retire it?

President Bush. Yes. Mr. President, I'm giving a speech tonight on the budget. I don't know if you have to give budget speeches, but sometimes it's hard to make those budget speeches very poetic. [*Laughter*]

It does not make sense to pay down debt prematurely and, therefore, have to pay a premium on the debt that you prepay. And so we've calculated the amount of debt that our Nation can pay off over the next 10 years, and that's $2 trillion, leaving about $800 billion unpaid.

The second followup question to that was Social Security. And tonight during my speech, I will lay out the part of the vision for modernizing the Social Security system.

We have an issue in this country, Mr. President, because people my age, affectionately known as baby boomers, will be retiring soon. And in my case, later rather than sooner, I hope. But anyway, we have trouble enough—there won't be enough money being put in the system to take care of the baby boomers when we retire. And therefore, the question is, how do we make the system work?

And I want to give younger workers the opportunity to manage some of their own money in the private markets. And to answer your question, some of that money could be used as part of a modernization plan.

Q. Do you and your economic advisers think that maybe some of this—[*inaudible*]—on the table—[*inaudible*]—short term or long term——

President Bush. No, we don't at all. As a matter of fact, we think it's the wise, wise thing to do. Again, American people have got to understand that we'll be paying down the debt as it comes due. But the idea of prepaying debt at a premium to the taxpayers makes no sense to do that.

Q. But no impact on interest rates because of the consequent——

President Bush. No, I don't think so. As a matter of fact, the interest rates would more likely be affected by monetary policy. The economy would be affected by good, sound fiscal policy because one of the things—I don't want to give you the whole speech, because I, of course, want you to pay attention to it. But I do believe we ought to accelerate the tax relief plan. The sooner we get money into the pockets of our taxpayers, the more likely it is our economy will even out.

We've got an economic problem, Mr. President, that is of concern. It should be a concern to our neighbors. I discussed this with President Fox. We've got a mutual friend in President Fox, the President of Mexico. And he is concerned about the nature of the U.S. economy, as well. And we're going to do everything we can to make sure our economy recovers quickly, which will be beneficial. As our trading partner, it will be very beneficial.

Si.

Temporary Protected Status

Q. Did you discuss anything about the TPS for the Colombia——

President Bush. We did. And the President made a very strong case. He was very plain spoken. He brought up the case, the concerns of over a million Colombians who live here in the United States, mainly in Queens, New York, and in the State of Florida, and I listened carefully.

[*At this point, a question to President Pastrana was asked and answered in Spanish, and a translation was not provided.*]

Upcoming Address to Congress

Q. Do you expect Democrats to give your speech a fair chance tonight? Or do you suspect that they're just ready to pounce? [*Laughter*]

President Bush. I, of course, will be giving the speech in the Chamber, and there will be Republicans and Democrats, but I'm really speaking to the American people. This is a speech—hold on a second—this is a speech that I want to make it clear to the American people that I have a reasonable plan for the budget.

I'm going to make it clear we meet priorities, and I'll explain what many of those priorities are; that we make sure that Social

Security, the money aimed for Social Security goes only to Social Security; that we pay down debt and it will be the largest repayment of debt ever; that we've got money for contingencies in the budget; and that there is still money left over for the tax relief plan.

The problem we have oftentimes in America is that people will be asked the question, "Do you want tax relief, or do you want somebody not to get their Medicare check?" I'm going to be making the case that with the right leadership, the right priorities, and the right focus, that we will fund important programs and have money left over for tax relief.

And it's important—it's important for the American people to get some of their own money back. One, it will help the economy. Secondly, it will help the American taxpayers pay off their own personal debt.

One of the issues we have, Mr. President, in the United States is high energy bills. The cost of energy is going up because we haven't had enough exploration relative to demand. And this cash that people will get back through tax relief will help the American families manage their budgets.

I really am looking forward to giving this speech. I hope you're looking forward to listening to it.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—most important speech so far, sir?

President Bush. Every one of them are important.

Andean Trade Preference Act Renewal

Q. [*Inaudible*]

President Bush. For trade? Absolutely. It's a very important treaty. She is asking about the free trade treaty of the Andean nations. Yes, sir—yes, ma'am, I'll be pushing it. I'm a free trader.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—to help the economy?

President Bush. Through trade, absolutely. And the President made a very strong case for broadening the trade agreement. I will bring up the matter with Ambassador Zoellick, who is my trade negotiator.

Adios.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:10 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Vicente Fox of Mexico. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Cuba
February 27, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, which states that the emergency declared with respect to the Government of Cuba's destruction of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace north of Cuba on February 24, 1996, is

to continue in effect beyond March 1, 2001.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
February 27, 2001.

NOTE: The notice of February 27 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on Administration Goals
February 27, 2001

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice President, Members of Congress: It's a great privilege to be here to outline a new budget and a new approach for governing our great country. I thank you for your invitation to speak here tonight. I know Congress had to formally invite me, and it could have been a close vote. [*Laughter*] So, Mr. Vice President, I appreciate you being here to break the tie. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank so many of you who have accepted my invitation to come to the White House to discuss important issues. We're off to a good start. I will continue to meet with you and ask for your input. You have been kind and candid, and I thank you for making a new President feel welcome.

The last time I visited the Capitol, I came to take an oath on the steps of this building. I pledged to honor our Constitution and laws, and I asked you to join me in setting a tone of civility and respect in Washington. I hope America is noticing the difference, because we're making progress. Together, we are changing the tone in the Nation's Capital. And this spirit of respect and cooperation is vital because, in the end, we will be judged not only by what we say or how we say it, we will be judged by what we're able to accomplish.

America today is a nation with great challenges but greater resources. An artist using statistics as a brush could paint two very different pictures of our country. One would have warning signs: increasing layoffs, rising energy prices, too many failing schools, persistent poverty, the stubborn vestiges of racism. Another picture would be full of blessings: a balanced budget, big surpluses, a military that is second to none, a country at peace with its neighbors, technology that is revolutionizing the world, and our greatest strength, concerned citizens who care for our country and care for each other.

Neither picture is complete in and of itself. And tonight I challenge and invite Congress to work with me to use the resources of one picture to repaint the other, to direct the advantages of our time to solve the problems of our people. Some of these resources will come from Government—some, but not all.

Year after year in Washington, budget debates seem to come down to an old, tired argument: on one side, those who want more Government, regardless of the cost; on the other, those who want less Government, regardless of the need. We should leave those arguments to the last century and chart a different course.

Government has a role, and an important role. Yet, too much Government crowds out initiative and hard work, private charity and the private economy. Our new governing vision says Government should be active but limited, engaged but not overbearing.

And my budget is based on that philosophy. It is reasonable, and it is responsible. It meets our obligations and funds our growing needs. We increase spending next year for Social Security and Medicare and

other entitlement programs by $81 billion. We've increased spending for discretionary programs by a very responsible 4 percent, above the rate of inflation. My plan pays down an unprecedented amount of our national debt. And then, when money is still left over, my plan returns it to the people who earned it in the first place.

A budget's impact is counted in dollars but measured in lives. Excellent schools, quality health care, a secure retirement, a cleaner environment, a stronger defense: These are all important needs, and we fund them. The highest percentage increase in our budget should go to our children's education. Education is not my top priority—education is my top priority, and by supporting this budget, you'll make it yours, as well.

Reading is the foundation of all learning. So during the next 5 years, we triple spending, adding $5 billion to help every child in America learn to read. Values are important, so we've tripled funding for character education to teach our children not only reading and writing but right from wrong. We've increased funding to train and recruit teachers, because we know a good education starts with a good teacher.

And I have a wonderful partner in this effort. I like teachers so much, I married one. Laura has begun a new effort to recruit Americans to the profession that will shape our future, teaching. She will travel across America to promote sound teaching practices and early reading skills in our schools and in programs such as Head Start.

When it comes to our schools, dollars alone do not always make the difference. Funding is important, and so is reform. So we must tie funding to higher standards and accountability for results.

I believe in local control of schools. We should not, and we will not, run public schools from Washington, DC. Yet when the Federal Government spends tax dollars, we must insist on results. Children should be tested on basic reading and math skills every year between grades three and eight. Measuring is the only way to know whether all our children are learning. And I want to know, because I refuse to leave any child behind in America.

Critics of testing contend it distracts from learning. They talk about teaching to the test. But let's put that logic to the test. If you test a child on basic math and reading skills and you're teaching to the test, you're teaching math and reading. And that's the whole idea. As standards rise, local schools will need more flexibility to meet them, so we must streamline the dozens of Federal education programs into five and let States spend money in those categories as they see fit.

Schools will be given a reasonable chance to improve and the support to do so. Yet if they don't, if they continue to fail, we must give parents and students different options: a better public school, a private school, tutoring, or a charter school. In the end, every child in a bad situation must be given a better choice because, when it comes to our children, failure is simply not an option.

Another priority in my budget is to keep the vital promises of Medicare and Social Security, and together we will do so. To meet the health care needs of all America's seniors, we double the Medicare budget over the next 10 years. My budget dedicates $238 billion to Medicare next year alone, enough to fund all current programs and to begin a new prescription drug benefit for low-income seniors. No senior in America should have to choose between buying food and buying prescriptions.

To make sure the retirement savings of America's seniors are not diverted into any other program, my budget protects all $2.6 trillion of the Social Security surplus for Social Security and for Social Security alone.

My budget puts a priority on access to health care, without telling Americans what doctor they have to see or what coverage they must choose. Many working Americans

do not have health care coverage, so we will help them buy their own insurance with refundable tax credits. And to provide quality care in low-income neighborhoods, over the next 5 years we will double the number of people served at community health care centers. And we will address the concerns of those who have health coverage, yet worry their insurance company doesn't care and won't pay.

Together this Congress and this President will find common ground to make sure doctors make medical decisions and patients get the health care they deserve with a Patients' Bill of Rights.

When it comes to their health, people want to get the medical care they need, not be forced to go to court because they didn't get it. We will ensure access to the courts for those with legitimate claims. But first, let's put in place a strong, independent review so we promote quality health care, not frivolous lawsuits.

My budget also increases funding for medical research, which gives hope to many who struggle with serious disease. Our prayers tonight are with one of your own who is engaged in his own fight against cancer, a fine Representative and a good man, Congressman Joe Moakley. I can think of no more appropriate tribute to Joe than to have the Congress finish the job of doubling the budget for the National Institutes of Health.

My New Freedom Initiative for Americans with disabilities funds new technologies, expands opportunities to work, and makes our society more welcoming. For the more than 50 million Americans with disabilities, we must continue to break down barriers to equality.

The budget I propose to you also supports the people who keep our country strong and free, the men and women who serve in the United States military. I'm requesting $5.7 billion in increased military pay and benefits and health care and housing. Our men and women in uniform give America their best, and we owe them our support.

America's veterans honored their commitment to our country through their military service. I will honor our commitment to them with a billion-dollar increase to ensure better access to quality care and faster decisions on benefit claims.

My budget will improve our environment by accelerating the cleanup of toxic brownfields. And I propose we make a major investment in conservation by fully funding the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Our national parks have a special place in our country's life. Our parks are places of great natural beauty and history. As good stewards, we must leave them better than we found them. So I propose providing $4.9 billion over 5 years for the upkeep of these national treasures.

And my budget adopts a hopeful new approach to help the poor and the disadvantaged. We must encourage and support the work of charities and faith-based and community groups that offer help and love, one person at a time. These groups are working in every neighborhood in America to fight homelessness and addiction and domestic violence, to provide a hot meal or a mentor or a safe haven for our children. Government should welcome these groups to apply for funds, not discriminate against them.

Government cannot be replaced by charities or volunteers. Government should not fund religious activities. But our Nation should support the good works of these good people who are helping their neighbors in need. So I propose allowing all taxpayers, whether they itemize or not, to deduct their charitable contributions. Estimates show this could encourage as much as $14 billion a year in new charitable giving, money that will save and change lives.

Our budget provides more than $700 million over the next 10 years for a Federal compassion capital fund, with a focused and noble mission, to provide a mentor to the

more than one million children with a parent in prison and to support other local efforts to fight illiteracy, teen pregnancy, drug addiction, and other difficult problems.

With us tonight is the mayor of Philadelphia. Please help me welcome Mayor John Street. [*Applause*] Mayor Street has encouraged faith-based and community organizations to make a significant difference in Philadelphia. He's invited me to his city this summer to see compassionate action. I'm personally aware of just how effective the mayor is. Mayor Street's a Democrat. Let the record show, I lost his city—big time. But some things are bigger than politics. So I look forward to coming to your city, to see your faith-based programs in action.

As Government promotes compassion, it also must promote justice. Too many of our citizens have cause to doubt our Nation's justice when the law points a finger of suspicion at groups instead of individuals. All our citizens are created equal and must be treated equally.

Earlier today I asked John Ashcroft, the Attorney General, to develop specific recommendations to end racial profiling. It's wrong, and we will end it in America. In so doing, we will not hinder the work of our Nation's brave police officers. They protect us every day, often at great risk. But by stopping the abuses of a few, we will add to the public confidence our police officers earn and deserve.

My budget has funded a responsible increase in our ongoing operations. It has funded our Nation's important priorities. It has protected Social Security and Medicare. And our surpluses are big enough that there is still money left over.

Many of you have talked about the need to pay down our national debt. I listened, and I agree. We owe it to our children and grandchildren to act now, and I hope you will join me to pay down $2 trillion in debt during the next 10 years. At the end of those 10 years, we will have paid down all the debt that is available to retire. That is more debt, repaid more quickly than has ever been repaid by any nation at any time in history.

We should also prepare for the unexpected, for the uncertainties of the future. We should approach our Nation's budget as any prudent family would, with a contingency fund for emergencies or additional spending needs. For example, after a strategic review, we may need to increase defense spending. We may need to increase spending for our farmers or additional money to reform Medicare. And so, my budget sets aside almost a trillion dollars over 10 years for additional needs. That is one trillion additional reasons you can feel comfortable supporting this budget.

We have increased our budget at a responsible 4 percent. We have funded our priorities. We paid down all the available debt. We have prepared for contingencies. And we still have money left over.

Yogi Berra once said, "When you come to a fork in the road, take it." [*Laughter*] Now, we come to a fork in the road; we have two choices. Even though we have already met our needs, we could spend the money on more and bigger Government. That's the road our Nation has traveled in recent years.

Last year Government spending shot up 8 percent. That's far more than our economy grew, far more than personal income grew, and far more than the rate of inflation. If you continue on that road, you will spend the surplus and have to dip into Social Security to pay other bills. Unrestrained Government spending is a dangerous road to deficits, so we must take a different path.

The other choice is to let the American people spend their own money to meet their own needs. I hope you will join me in standing firmly on the side of the people. You see, the growing surplus exists because taxes are too high and Government is charging more than it needs. The people

of America have been overcharged, and on their behalf, I am here asking for a refund.

Some say my tax plan is too big. Others say it's too small. I respectfully disagree. [*Laughter*] This plan is just right. I didn't throw darts at a board to come up with a number for tax relief. I didn't take a poll or develop an arbitrary formula that might sound good. I looked at problems in the Tax Code and calculated the cost to fix them.

A tax rate of 15 percent is too high for those who earn low wages, so we must lower the rate to 10 percent. No one should pay more than a third of the money they earn in Federal income taxes, so we lowered the top rate to 33 percent.

This reform will be welcome relief for America's small businesses, which often pay taxes at the highest rate. And help for small business means jobs for Americans. We simplified the Tax Code by reducing the number of tax rates from the current five rates to four lower ones, 10 percent, 15, 25, and 33 percent. In my plan, no one is targeted in or targeted out. Everyone who pays income taxes will get relief.

Our Government should not tax and, thereby, discourage marriage, so we reduced the marriage penalty. I want to help families rear and support their children, so we doubled the child credit to $1,000 per child. It's not fair to tax the same earnings twice—once when you earn them, and again when you die—so we must repeal the death tax.

These changes add up to significant help. A typical family with two children will save $1,600 a year on their Federal income taxes. Now, $1,600 may not sound like a lot to some, but it means a lot to many families: $1,600 buys gas for two cars for an entire year; it pays tuition for a year at a community college; it pays the average family grocery bill for 3 months. That's real money.

With us tonight, representing many American families, are Steven and Josefina Ramos. They are from Pennsylvania, but they could be from any one of your districts. Steven is the network administrator for a school district. Josefina is a Spanish teacher at a charter school. And they have a 2-year-old daughter.

Steven and Josefina tell me they pay almost $8,000 a year in Federal income taxes. My plan will save them more than $2,000. Let me tell you what Steven says: "Two thousand dollars a year means a lot to my family. If we had this money, it would help us reach our goal of paying off our personal debt in 2 years' time." After that, Steven and Josefina want to start saving for Lianna's college education.

My attitude is, Government should never stand in the way of families achieving their dreams. And as we debate this issue, always remember, the surplus is not the Government's money; the surplus is the people's money.

For lower income families, my tax plan restores basic fairness. Right now, complicated tax rules punish hard work. A waitress supporting two children on $25,000 a year can lose nearly half of every additional dollar she earns above the $25,000. Her overtime, her hardest hours, are taxed at nearly 50 percent. This sends a terrible message: "You'll never get ahead."

But America's message must be different. We must honor hard work, never punish it. With tax relief, overtime will no longer be over-taxed-time for the waitress. People with the smallest incomes will get the highest percentage of reductions. And millions of additional American families will be removed from the income tax rolls entirely.

Tax relief is right, and tax relief is urgent. The long economic expansion that began almost 10 years ago is faltering. Lower interest rates will eventually help, but we cannot assume they will do the job all by themselves.

Forty years ago, and then 20 years ago, two Presidents, one Democrat, one Republican, John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan, advocated tax cuts to, in President Kennedy's words, "get this country moving

again." They knew then what we must do now. To create economic growth and opportunity, we must put money back into the hands of the people who buy goods and create jobs.

We must act quickly. The Chairman of the Federal Reserve has testified before Congress that tax cuts often come too late to stimulate economic recovery. So I want to work with you to give our economy an important jump-start by making tax relief retroactive.

We must act now because it is the right thing to do. We must also act now because we have other things to do. We must show courage to confront and resolve tough challenges, to restructure our Nation's defenses, to meet our growing need for energy, and to reform Medicare and Social Security.

America has a window of opportunity to extend and secure our present peace by promoting a distinctly American internationalism. We will work with our allies and friends to be a force for good and a champion of freedom. We will work for free markets, free trade, and freedom from oppression. Nations making progress toward freedom will find America is their friend. We will promote our values. We will promote the peace, and we need a strong military to keep the peace.

But our military was shaped to confront the challenges of the past. So I've asked the Secretary of Defense to review America's Armed Forces and prepare to transform them to meet emerging threats. My budget makes a downpayment on the research and development that will be required. Yet, in our broader transformation effort, we must put strategy first, then spending. Our defense vision will drive our defense budget, not the other way around.

Our Nation also needs a clear strategy to confront the threats of the 21st century, threats that are more widespread and less certain. They range from terrorists who threaten with bombs to tyrants in rogue nations intent upon developing weapons of mass destruction. To protect our own people, our allies, and friends, we must develop and we must deploy effective missile defenses. And as we transform our military, we can discard cold war relics and reduce our own nuclear forces to reflect today's needs.

A strong America is the world's best hope for peace and freedom. Yet the cause of freedom rests on more than our ability to defend ourselves and our allies. Freedom is exported every day, as we ship goods and products that improve the lives of millions of people. Free trade brings greater political and personal freedom. Each of the previous five Presidents has had the ability to negotiate far-reaching trade agreements. Tonight I ask you to give me the strong hand of Presidential trade promotion authority and to do so quickly.

As we meet tonight, many citizens are struggling with the high cost of energy. We have a serious energy problem that demands a national energy policy. The West is confronting a major energy shortage that has resulted in high prices and uncertainty. I've asked Federal agencies to work with California officials to help speed construction of new energy sources, and I have directed Vice President Cheney, Commerce Secretary Evans, Energy Secretary Abraham, and other senior members in my administration to develop a national energy policy.

Our energy demand outstrips our supply. We can produce more energy at home while protecting our environment, and we must. We can produce more electricity to meet demand, and we must. We can promote alternative energy sources and conservation, and we must. America must become more energy independent, and we will.

Perhaps the biggest test of our foresight and courage will be reforming Medicare and Social Security. Medicare's finances are strained, and its coverage is outdated. Ninety-nine percent of employer-provided health plans offer some form of prescription drug coverage. Medicare does not. The

framework for reform has been developed by Senators Frist and Breaux and Congressman Thomas, and now is the time to act.

Medicare must be modernized, and we must make sure that every senior on Medicare can choose a health care plan that offers prescription drugs.

Seven years from now, the baby boom generation will begin to claim Social Security benefits. Every one in this Chamber knows that Social Security is not prepared to fully fund their retirement. And we only have a couple of years to get prepared. Without reform, this country will one day awaken to a stark choice: Either a drastic rise in payroll taxes or a radical cut in retirement benefits. There is a better way.

This spring I will form a Presidential commission to reform Social Security. The commission will make its recommendations by next fall. Reform should be based on these principles: It must preserve the benefits of all current retirees and those nearing retirement; it must return Social Security to sound financial footing; and it must offer personal savings accounts to younger workers who want them.

Social Security now offers workers a return of less than 2 percent on the money they pay into the system. To save the system, we must increase that by allowing younger workers to make safe, sound investments that yield a higher rate of return. Ownership, access to wealth, and independence should not be the privilege of the few. They are the hope of every American, and we must make them the foundation of Social Security.

By confronting the tough challenge of reform, by being responsible with our budget, we can earn the trust of the American people. And we can add to that trust by enacting fair and balanced election and campaign reforms.

The agenda I have set before you tonight is worthy of a great nation. America is a nation at peace but not a nation at rest. Much has been given to us, and much is expected. Let us agree to bridge old divides. But let us also agree that our good will must be dedicated to great goals. Bipartisanship is more than minding our manners; it is doing our duty.

No one can speak in this Capitol and not be awed by its history. At so many turning points, debates in these chambers have reflected the collected or divided conscience of our country. And when we walk through Statuary Hall and see those men and women of marble, we're reminded of their courage and achievement.

Yet America's purpose is never found only in statues or history. America's purpose always stands before us. Our generation must show courage in a time of blessing, as our Nation has always shown in times of crisis. And our courage, issue by issue, can gather to greatness and serve our country. This is the privilege and responsibility we share. And if we work together, we can prove that public service is noble.

We all came here for a reason. We all have things we want to accomplish and promises to keep. *Juntos podemos*—together we can.

We can make Americans proud of their Government. Together we can share in the credit of making our country more prosperous and generous and just and earn from our conscience and from our fellow citizens the highest possible praise: Well done, good and faithful servants.

Thank you all. Good night, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:10 p.m. in the House Chamber of the Capitol. In his remarks, he referred to Major League Baseball Hall of Fame member Yogi Berra.

Memorandum on Racial Profiling
February 27, 2001

Memorandum for the Attorney General

Subject: Racial Profiling

I hereby direct you to review the use by Federal law enforcement authorities of race as a factor in conducting stops, searches, and other investigative procedures. In particular, I ask that you work with the Congress to develop methods or mechanisms to collect any relevant data from Federal law enforcement agencies and work in cooperation with State and local law enforcement in order to assess the extent and nature of any such practices.

I further direct that you report back to me with your findings and recommendations for the improvement of the just and equal administration of our Nation's laws.

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 28.

Exchange With Reporters in Beaver, Pennsylvania
February 28, 2001

National Economy/Tax Relief Legislation

Q. Chairman Greenspan this morning said that the slowdown doesn't look like it's run its course yet, and I'm wondering if you can comment on that.

The President. All the more reason to accelerate the tax cut. And I think our Nation needs to be wary of the economic times, and Congress needs to know that. Congress needs to work with me to accelerate a meaningful tax reduction package as quickly as possible.

Q. With the votes the way they are in the Senate, sir, can you get your package through in time and make a difference?

The President. I am confident we're going to get a significant tax relief package through. It's going to have enough oomph to it to help the economy. And that's one reason I'm traveling around the country, to make the case.

Q. Does that suggest, sir——

The President. ——Roberts [John Roberts, CBS News], on the other hand.

Q. Does that suggest, sir, that it may not be the package that you want?

The President. Oh, we're going to get the package out.

Address to the Congress

Q. Sir, how do you feel it went last night, Mr. President?

The President. You need to ask other people. I felt—well, I've passed the initial review. My wife thought I did all right. That was——

Q. Were you nervous?

The President. No, I wasn't nervous at all. I was pleased with the reception, and I was excited to be there. I had something to say, and I was prepared. I spent enough time on the speech to be comfortable with what I was going to say.

I was struck by how cozy the confines were in the hall. I've never really, obviously, been there in that position. It was actually the first State of the Union type of speech I'd ever seen. In this case, I actually got to—I couldn't say I exactly watched it—participated in it.

Tax Relief Legislation/National Economy

Q. How hard will be——

The President. You know, it's never easy for the President to get exactly what he wants. We're going to get a—I believe it's going to be $1.6 trillion. And people begin to realize the logic in the plan and that we can meet priorities, including debt repayment, and have a contingency fund, and that we need to pass a substantial portion of the money back to the people in order to help them help themselves, as well as provide stimulus to make sure our economy grows.

And I'm really looking forward to continuing to make the case—last night was the kickoff—today, tomorrow, and then the following week, and we'll take a grand tour of the country together. I'm speaking to people that are going to make a difference, and those are the citizens. Those are the people that will actually be writing their Congressmen and Senators, encouraging them to hopefully join with me in passing money back.

Q. Mr. President, now that you've taken off the glasses, sir, would you care to comment on Mr. Greenspan's testimony this morning?

The President. Say it again? What did you say?

Q. Mr. Greenspan offered a sober assessment of the current state of the economy through the sharp downturn that's been evident in the last few months. It seems to be far from running its course.

The President. I am concerned about the state of the economy. I recognize the economy is slowing down. And that's all the more reason for Congress to work to pass money back to the people and form the meaningful tax relief, and to do it as quickly as possible.

Q. And if you put the vote in the Senate, sir, as they are, do you believe you can get your tax package through the way you want it?

The President. I think we will get the tax package through. I believe a lot of people are going to take a hard look at reality and look at the facts and realize we've got ample money to meet needs and pay down debt and that we've got to stimulate the economy through tax relief, as well as give people more cash so that they can manage their own accounts.

There's a lot of talk in Washington about national debt, and that's a legitimate discussion. But I also want people to understand, there's a lot of people who have got consumer debt, and tax relief will help people manage their own balance sheets.

See you in Nebraska. By the way, I made you famous by calling you Stretch.

Q. My parents said that I've been called a lot worse.

The President. Particularly by them.

NOTE: The exchange began at approximately 9:15 a.m. during a tour of Control Concepts Corp. In his remarks, the President referred to reporter David "Stretch" Gregory, NBC News. Reporters referred to Federal Reserve Board Chairman Alan Greenspan. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks in a Discussion on Small Business in Beaver
February 28, 2001

[*Geoffrey Taylor, president, Control Concepts Corp., thanked the President for his visit and said his 4-year-old daughter was curious about the names of the President's puppies.*]

The President. Let me see if I can get it right. [*Laughter*] We're the proud owner of Spot. She was born in the White House in 1989 to Millie.

On November 4th, I was campaigning in New Jersey. It happened to be my wife's birthday, and the then-Governor of New Jersey said, "Well, Governor, what did you buy your wife for her birthday?" I said, "Nothing"—which wasn't the right answer—[*laughter*]—certainly not politically correct, as they say. It then happened that Laura and Christie Todd started talking about the fact that Christie Todd raises Scottish terriers. It turns out I did buy my wife something for her birthday, a Scottish terrier named Barney, who is having a heck of a time on the carpet upstairs in the White House, by the way.

The answer is, Spot and Barney—[*laughter*]—and one cat named India.

[*Mr. Taylor described the operation of Control Concepts and stated that the President's tax plan would be of great benefit to Control Concepts and to small companies across the Nation.*]

The President. Well, thank you, sir.

I want to thank you all for having me. First, the greatness—this country's greatness is because there are a lot of entrepreneurs in America, and you are an entrepreneur. And I'm honored to be sitting next to you and your son. I love the concept of a family-owned business, the idea of a mom and her son working together to not only produce a product but, more importantly, to employ capital so people can find work. After all, small businesses are the main creators of jobs in America. And all public policy and tax policy must work to create an environment in which entrepreneurship can flourish. So my speech last night was speaking not only about a budget but was also talking about the entrepreneurial spirit in our country. And one of the reasons we came here is because the entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well here, and I appreciate it very much.

It is important to remember the role of Government is not to create wealth. The role of Government is to create an environment in which businesses, small and large, can flourish. That's the role of Government.

I want to thank my friend the Governor of Pennsylvania for being here. We hosted the Governors at the White House last Sunday night. It happened to be the first lady of Pennsylvania's birthday, as well. And it was good to see you, Tom. Thanks for coming.

Pennsylvania is well represented in the United States Senate by two very capable, smart, concerned Pennsylvania citizens—so concerned, we spent most of the flight from Washington to Pennsylvania talking about how to make the economy of Pennsylvania a better place. Senator Specter and Senator Santorum are not shrinking violets when it comes to making the case for the citizens of Pennsylvania and the country. I want to thank you all for traveling with me. Finally, a freshman just like me, Melissa Hart, and Melissa is an active soul.

I appreciate you giving me the chance to explain the rationale behind my budget. It was very important for people to hear that what I think is—what I know is true, and that is we've got a lot of cashflow coming into the U.S. Treasury. And the fundamental question is what to do with it: How best can we spend the people's money?

Last night I made the case that our Nation can achieve the following priorities: One, set aside all payroll taxes that are designed for Social Security to be spent only on Social Security. That is $2.6 trillion over the next 10 years will be set aside to be spent only—only—on Social Security. I believe there's wide consensus on both sides of the aisle that that is prudent fiscal policy.

Secondly, I made the case that we can prioritize and fund Medicare for our senior citizens, that we're going to spend—we're going to double the Medicare budget over the next 10 years. And if we have the right kind of leadership in the Congress, someone willing to—people who are willing to work with the President to reform Medicare, we will not only have money to fund Medicare, we will have a Medicare system

that will enable seniors to choose the health care plan that meets their needs, all of which will include prescription drugs.

I made the case that we can meet our needs by funding what's called discretionary spending at a 4 percent increase. Some says 4 percent sounds like a small number, but I want to remind you, it's greater than the rate of inflation. It is less than what Congress spent during the last three sessions, I readily concede. But we've got to be careful about overspending in Washington, DC. We shouldn't have bidding contests in Washington. What we ought to have is rewards for people who are concerned about overspending, it seems like to me. And so I propose increasing the discretionary spending at 4 percent.

It means, for example, that public schools will get a significant increase in spending out of the Federal Government. Now, having said that, I promise you I will stand tough to the principle that we ought to run our schools locally—that local control of the schools—that we've got to run our schools locally in order to achieve excellence for every single child.

We need to pay our soldiers more money. We need to make sure that they are well paid. But before we spend a lot of money on the Defense Department, it seems wise—and I think business people will agree with this—that we ought to have a strategy about what our military ought to look like in the long term. We've got to make sure we have a proper strategy on how to prioritize our military spending before we do so.

There is still money left in the budget, after growing discretionary spending by 4 percent, after funding the entitlement programs, after meeting priorities. Over the next 10 years, we set aside a trillion dollars for what I call contingencies, a trillion dollars in case we need money for additional Medicare spending or military spending or spending on the farmers in America. So there is money set aside for that, and there is still money left over.

Now, the debate always seems to come out of Washington that if you have tax relief, somebody is not going to get their Medicare check, or if you have tax relief, somebody is not going to get a Social Security check. My point to you is that we set priorities and fund them; we protect Social Security and Medicare and fund them; we spend money on the military to keep the peace; we set aside contingencies—money for contingencies, and there's still money.

And what I want to do is to remind Americans—this is why I've come to western Pennsylvania—remind Americans that the surplus is your money; it is not the Government's money. And once we fund priorities, we ought to give it to you.

One reason Dave and Janet sit here is because I think it is very important for people to know that behind every statistic there are Americans who—in whom we ought to place our trust. These good folks pay $4,400 in Federal income taxes. Under the plan I proposed last night in the Congress—which doubles the child credit from $500 to $1,000, reduces all rates for everybody who pays taxes, drops the top rate from 39 to 33, reduces the bottom rate from 15 to 10, reduces the effects of the marriage penalty, eliminates the death tax—these good folks will save $1,980.

Now, for a lot of folks, they'll yawn and say, "Gosh, that's $1,980. That's really nothing." We disagree. We disagree; $1,980 a year can make a big difference to people who are raising two lovely children, to people who want to set aside money for savings. It is so important for Members of the Congress to realize what the average citizen is going through today. When you couple high energy prices with consumer debt, there's a lot of good folks who struggle in America. And it seems like to me that the right thing for Washington to do is, once we fund our priorities, enhance the cashflows of the people who pay the bill in the first place in America. In so

doing, not only do we help working Americans but we also will add a second wind to an economy that is slowing down.

I come from the school of thought—I know many of you do, as well—that sound fiscal policy coupled with sound monetary policy is going to make a difference in this economy, that by giving people their own money back will be a part of sound fiscal policy. The more money you have to spend, the more money circulating, the more likely it is the economy will recover. And all of us in Washington must do everything we can to make sure that the economy is strong enough for people to be able to keep jobs and find work, if they're looking for work. That's the whole purpose of economic growth, is for people to be able to find work.

I'm so thankful that you gave me a chance to come to make my case. I can't think of a better place to make the case than in a business run by a family, a business run by entrepreneurs, a business who care more about their employees than they do about themselves because they recognize if the employee is happy, an employee can work, an employee is satisfied, that the business itself will run well.

It's my honor also to be here with Dave and Janet and Erin and Jonathan, Americans who under our plan will receive real, tangible benefits—but that's not really the right way to say it, is it; it's your money to begin with—Americans who under our plan will keep more of their own money so they can spend it where they see fit.

Thank you very much.

[*Employee Dave Berger explained how he started working for Control Concepts.*]

The President. I'll give you a loaded question. Do you want some tax relief? [*Laughter*]

Mr. Berger. All you can give. [*Laughter*]

The President. You know, I'm constantly amazed that—first of all, one of the things that happens when you talk about tax relief, people immediately go to the class warfare argument that "only the rich people will benefit," which obscures reality. And reality is, $1,980 is a lot of money. And I'm not going to ask you what you're going to do with it, because I trust you to do the right thing with it. Frankly, it's none of the Government's business about what you decide to do with your own money. But I bet it may have something to do with your children's future education, for example.

[*Administrative medical technician Janet Berger briefly described her work and said she and her patients were pleased that the President was discussing their health care needs.*]

The President. Yes. Well, we're concerned, all of us are concerned about making sure that Medicare fulfills the promise to our seniors. It is a solemn obligation that the Federal Government has assumed, and it's a solemn obligation that the Federal Government will keep. And there will be a lot of discussion, a lot of argument about how to get where we're going to end up, but we're going to end up with reform that will make the system solvent and give seniors a variety of options in order to tailor a plan that meets their needs, all of which will include prescription drugs. And it's going to be a titanic struggle. But it's one that, with the right leadership and the right tone in Washington, DC, people I think are going to be able to come together on, and I think we'll get something done.

Mrs. Berger. And on a personal note, I'm glad to hear that your tax reform will refund almost $2,000 for our family for education and our needs.

The President. Well, thanks. I—let me talk about a couple of aspects of this tax relief plan that I want to explain to you.

First of all, I believe that the Government should not decide, oh, you get tax relief, and you don't get tax relief. To me, the best tax policy is to treat everybody fairly and to say if you pay taxes, you get relief.

Secondly, it is very important to understand that the Tax Code is unfair for people at the bottom end of the economic ladder. If you're, say, a single mom struggling to get ahead in life and you're making about $22,000 a year, as she begins to earn additional money, she loses earned-income tax credit; she pays payroll taxes; and she pays income taxes, which means that every additional dollar above a level around $22,000 is taxed at nearly 50 percent. That's the way this Tax Code is structured. It means that folks who struggle to get to the middle class pay a higher marginal rate than someone who is successful, someone who has got quite a bit of cashflow, and that's not fair.

Part of the tax relief package has got to be aimed at making the code easy to understand and fair. One thing our country is known for is being a fair country. Another thing we ought to be known for is that we want people to succeed, and the code ought to reward success.

Secondly, a lot of small businesses, as I mentioned earlier, these small businesses provide, by far, the vast majority of new jobs in America. And dropping the top rate will serve as a catalyst to attract capital to small businesses. Many small businesses are unincorporated small businesses; many are what's called Subchapter S businesses, and they pay the high rate. And by dropping the rate, it will provide capital for small business expansion. And that's very important for this country.

And I know the rhetoric will be, "Oh, he's focused on the billionaires," and all that business. That's called class warfare. The truth of the matter is, this plan is aimed at helping small businesses flourish and grow and succeed. It is important for America that the small-business person remain vital and healthy.

And so this is a plan that is well-thought-out. It is—I found it interesting during the course of the speech last night, I said, "Some think it's too big"—and of course, those who thought it was too big cheered—"and some think it's too little"—and they cheered. Of course, I thought it was just right. [*Laughter*]

Let me say that part of my job as President, as well—I might as well be just very upfront—is to travel the country ginning up support for this plan. And that's why I'm here. I would hope that you would not only contact your immediate Representatives—I don't think you need to in the case of the three here—[*laughter*]—but I would hope that if you find others that may be reluctant to listen to what we have to offer—and I say "we" because this is a plan that really is aimed for people—that you would help, that you would write, that you would e-mail, that you would call folks to encourage them to be openminded and to think about you when they cast votes.

And this is a plan that will benefit hard-working Americans. I find it such an honor to be your President, and I love traveling the country, to go out and—I'm going from here to Nebraska and Iowa and Arkansas and Georgia. And it is exciting because this is a great country, made great by the fact that it's got such wonderful people. And it's so important for all of us who have the honor of representing you to have public policy in mind that makes lives easier. And this series of initiatives that we're going to be debating over the next months will be aimed, if it's done right, at easing the burden on the working people in the country. And America will be even stronger as a result.

So it's an honor to be here.

[*Mr. Taylor stated the President's tax plan would be good not only for the economy and for employees but would allow small-business owners to reinvest in their businesses, creating a cycle of economic expansion. He added that long-term debt reduction would further spur the economy.*]

The President. I appreciate you bringing that up. We have set aside $2 trillion over the next 10 years to pay down debt. Now,

people say, "Well, why don't you pay all the debt off?" One reason why you don't pay all the debt off is because at the end of 10 years, a number of bonds will have not matured. It does not make economic sense to prepay American debt that will cost American taxpayers a premium to do so.

And so we pay down all available debt; all the debt that matures will be paid off. And it's going to ease the interest burden on the country. It makes fiscal sanity, sense to do so. And there's ample cashflow to be able to meet the debt requirements and put aside a contingency fee and provide tax relief.

I urge the Congress to be cautious about overspending. The rate of spending increased last year by 8 percent. That is a significant number, particularly when you're talking in terms of trillions. And there was something like over 5,000 one-time expenditures in the budget at the end of the year. And so we have to work with the appropriators to say, "Let's be reasonable about how we spend the people's money."

A sure way to make sure this economy gets drug down is to overspend. A bloated Federal Government will affect economic vitality. And so it's going to require a lot of us working together to say, "Well, wait a minute. It's important to set priorities." One thing business owners learn how to do is how to prioritize and then have the discipline necessary to meet priorities.

So I appreciate you bringing up the debt retirement, and it's an issue that I'm confident we can work together on. It's just important for people to know that it's only wise to pay down a certain portion of the debt before it costs taxpayers an additional premium. And that doesn't make any sense. It doesn't make any sense to do that.

[*Mr. Berger said he was interested in education reform and impressed that the President would increase spending for reading.*]

The President. I am. You all know I used to be a Governor, and therefore, I'm a little suspect about Federal involvement in any way, shape, or form in education. I do, however, think that it is appropriate for the Federal Government to spend money, so long as it's spent wisely. I can't think of anything more important than to increase the amount of money available at the Federal level for reading programs, so long as the strategy makes sense.

And there has been a lot of thought and a lot of research about what works. A lot of programs in States, you know, abandoned the concept of phonics, and as a result, many children weren't learning to read. The reason I bring that up is I want to reinvigorate the curriculum debate, all based upon—the conclusion of which we based upon a simple concept: If it works, use it. So part of the reading initiative is to encourage people to analyze the facts about reading.

Secondly, I strongly believe in diagnosis. And I believe we've got to measure children. And I believe we've got to measure children to make sure that not any children get left behind. And that includes K-through-two little children. We ought to develop a reading diagnostic tool that can be easy to administer but will point up where there are some reading deficiencies that need to be corrected early, before it's too late. That is a very feasible and logical approach to reading.

Finally, I know we need to retrain teachers. Part of the failures in our society thus far have been that some teacher colleges—I'm certainly not accusing any here in the State of Pennsylvania, Governor—that have not taught teachers how to teach reading. And if that be the case, we need to retrain teachers in the science of reading, so they can teach reading. So I believe this makes sense, the initiative.

I used to be a business person. As a matter of fact, I was in a business where the results were posted every day. It's called baseball. Generally, the results weren't all that good. [*Laughter*]

So I understand when the president of a company says, "What is the bottom line?" It is a philosophy to which I adhere. I ask the question, are the children learning? And if we spend Federal money, particularly on disadvantaged children, the debate ought to be not whether or not we ought to spend money on disadvantaged children; the debate ought to be, are we getting our money's worth?

I believe every child can learn. I refuse to accept excuses that "there are certain children who can't learn; therefore, let's don't measure, or let's just move them through the system."

And so therefore, I'm asking Congress to say—to enact this reform. If you receive Federal money, you, the State of Pennsylvania—or the State of Texas or any other State—must devise and implement an accountability system that determines whether or not children are learning basic English skills and math skills. That's what we want to know. Accountability becomes the whole cornerstone for reform. Without measurement, we're just guessing. With measurement, it would enable policymakers and educators to devise programs that will meet needs. You don't know if you don't measure.

And so the crux of the reform is that we do spend some more money, and that's fine. But money alone is simply not the answer. There must be reform. There must be a system in place that creates the incentive for people to change when there's failure and to address problems early, before it's too late. It's the whole cornerstone of what we're trying to do.

The State of Pennsylvania can design the remedies. They can design what remedies will ultimately make a difference in terms of creating educational excellence. The Federal Government ought to be focused on some targeted spending but also understanding that systemic reform will yield positive results for children from all walks of life. It is an incredibly important debate that is taking place in Washington.

You will hear much of the dialog that will be all focused on dollars, and that's an important part of the debate. But the truth of the matter is that Federal Government only funds about 7 percent of the education budgets in aggregate across the Nation. Most funding, as you well know, in Pennsylvania comes from either State Government or local property taxes. And that's where the power ought to be. It ought to be closest to the people who are paying the bills in order to make sure that schools chart the path to excellence necessary so every child learns.

But at the Federal level, we can institute structural reform or insist upon changes that will eventually yield to structural reform, and that's what the whole educational debate is about. And it's an important debate in America, and I'm really glad we've engaged early on that subject in the Senate and the House. You got more than you wanted.

Mr. Taylor. Education is also very important to me. As I had mentioned earlier, I have two small children. And as they grow up, we need to have some type of accountability so that they are learning the reading and writing skills necessary.

The President. It starts with you, however, as you know.

[*The discussion continued to its conclusion.*]

NOTE: The discussion began at 9:35 a.m. at Control Concepts Corp., a manufacturer of industrial switch devices. In his remarks, the President referred to former New Jersey Gov. Christine Todd Whitman; Carolyn Taylor Renninger, chief executive officer, Control Concepts Corp., and mother of Geoffrey Taylor; and Gov. Tom Ridge of Pennsylvania and his wife, Michele.

Remarks in Omaha, Nebraska
February 28, 2001

The President. Thank you very much. I'm glad I came. I'm not saying I don't like my new address; I do. But it's good to get out in the countryside, too. It's good to get out so I can shake hands with the folks that make America work. It's good to get to the heartland, where people proudly stand on values of faith and family. I'm honored you'd invite me. I'm glad I came.

Mr. Mayor, thank you for your friendship. It's great to be here with the Governor and first lady of the State of Nebraska, two fine people and two good friends of Laura and mine. It's also a thrill to travel from Washington with two fine United States Senators, Senator Hagel and Senator Nelson. The good thing about these two Senators is this: I know I'm going to be able to count on them in the pinch. I know when it comes to doing the right thing, they'll listen to the people of Nebraska. I'm also honored to be traveling with the Congressman, Lee Terry. He's a good, solid man. I'm proud to be on the stage with three Iowa Congressmen. And I appreciate you relaxing your border standards to let them in. [*Laughter*] The Lieutenant Governor is here.

My fellow citizens, it is an honor to be your President. I'm proud to call 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue home, and so is the First Lady. And I was proud to stand up in front of the United States Congress last night to bring a message of the American people, a commonsense message, a message of budgets and priorities. I truly felt like I was representing you when I talked about fiscal sanity and talked about the need for our Government to set clear priorities.

One of our priorities in the budget and one of our national priorities must be to make sure that every child—I mean every child—gets educated in the great land called America. Even though I have a Washington, DC, temporary address, I want you to know I strongly believe in local control of schools. I believe the people who care more about the children of Nebraska are the citizens of Nebraska. And we must work together, the Congress and the executive branch must work together to pass power out of Washington to provide flexibility at the local level. One size does not fit all when it comes to educating the children of our country.

I want to insist that we spend more money on programs like reading initiatives—an initiative that will help all children learn to read, an initiative that will be based upon the fact that reading is a science and we must use curriculum that will work. Phonics needs to be an integral part of the curriculum.

We're going to raise the standards. You see, what we believe is that every child in America can learn. We're going to reject the thought that "certain children can't learn, so we'll just move them through the system." That's got to end—it's got to end. And what we stand for, what the people know makes sense is that in order to determine whether or not all children are learning, it's essential that we measure. It's essential that local folks develop strong accountability systems.

So we ask the question, do you know how to read? And if you do, we'll praise the teachers. And we always have got to praise the teachers. But if our accountability system shows that children are not learning to read, instead of sitting by and saying, "Oh, maybe something positive will happen," it will serve as a go-by; it will serve as an opportunity for us to say, "Let's solve the problems early before it's too late." There are no second-rate children in America, and there are no second-rate dreams. So our budget prioritizes education

with the understanding, however, that the schools will be run at the local level.

I set another priority, and that's to pay the men and women who wear our uniform better wages. I am proud to be the Commander in Chief. The mission of the United States military will be to train our troops to be prepared to fight and win war and, therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place.

A priority in the budget is to make sure that people who don't have health care insurance who work have health care insurance. A priority in the budget is to fulfill our promise to the seniors by funding Medicare. I want you to know you can hear all the rhetoric about the apologists for bigger Government in Washington, but with the right priorities and the right focus, we will double the Medicare budget over the next 10 years to make sure our seniors have got a Medicare system that we can be proud of, one that, by the way, includes prescription drugs.

Oh, I know you'll hear a lot of talk about Social Security, and we should talk about Social Security. But under our vision of what we ought to do with the budget, we set aside all $2.6 trillion of the payroll taxes that are heading into Social Security and spend them only on Social Security.

Now, some of the people in Washington aren't going to like my budget because we don't grow the budget quite as fast as they would like. The budget increased last year by 8 percent. That's significantly higher than the rate of inflation. That was higher than real income grew. I mean, they were growing that budget—it was like a bidding contest to see who could spend the most money got out of town first. Those days must end. The budget I submitted to the Congress is one that said we could meet our needs and grow our discretionary spending at a realistic and reasonable 4 percent.

There's a lot of talk in Washington about debt, and like you, I'm concerned about debt. I want to remind you there's two types of debt: One is at the Government level, and one is at the individual level. First let me talk about Government debt. With the right kind of leadership and the right kind of focus and working with members of both parties, we can pay down $2 trillion of national debt over the next decade.

Somebody said, "Well, why don't you pay down more than that?" Well, first of all, a lot of the bonds don't retire, aren't to be retired—they don't expire during the 10-year period. It makes absolutely no sense to prepay debt which will cost the taxpayers more money. That doesn't make any sense. We ought to pay debt as it comes due. And the only debt that comes due is $2 trillion over the next 10 years, and that's the debt we'll repay.

We paid down debt; we've met our priorities; there's still money left over. And like any wise person who cares about budgets, we ought to set some aside for contingencies. So we set aside a trillion dollars over the next 10 years for contingencies. And what might some of those contingencies be?

Well, making sure we take care of the seniors. As you know, one of the things I'm going to do is have a full review of our military's capabilities and how we ought to restructure our forces to meet the future. And perhaps we'll need more money to fund those priorities.

I can assure you, we're going to worry about the agricultural sector here in the United States. And perhaps—and perhaps we'll need to spend some of that contingency money on the ag sector as we transform our agricultural sector to one that is going to be able to trade freely around the world.

Let me say as an aside, I strongly support ethanol. Let me say as an aside, we should not use food as a diplomatic weapon from this point forward. We shouldn't view agriculture as a stepchild when it comes to international trade negotiations.

So we've set priorities. We've paid down $2 trillion of debt. We've got a trillion dollars of contingency set aside over the next 10 years, and there's still money left over—there's still money left over—and there's a fundamental choice: Do we spend it?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. Or do we remember whose money it is in the first place?

The surplus is not the Government's money. The surplus is the people's money, and I'm here to ask you to join me in making that case to any Federal official you can find. I think we're in pretty good shape with the Nebraska delegation. I certainly hope so. I certainly hope so.

But this is a plan that hears the voices of thousands of working Americans, people who are struggling to get ahead. I'm keenly aware the energy bills are going up all across the country. We need an energy policy. We also must have a tax relief policy that understands working Americans are paying higher energy costs than ever before.

I'm keenly aware that many of our citizens have got a lot of consumer debt. There's a lot of talk about debt at the national level, and I'm worried about it. I'm also worried about consumer debt on individual families. I'm aware that this economy is beginning to sputter a little bit, and it makes sense to combine good monetary policy with good fiscal policy. I believe by giving people some of your own money back it will help kick-start this economy so people will be able to find work who's looking for a job.

In case anybody asks you, here's the plan. We're going to drop the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent. We increase the child credit from $500 to $1,000. We drop all rates and simplify the code. We drop the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent, and there's two primary reasons, two reasons I want to share with you. One is there ought to be some principle involved in the Tax Code, and one of the principles is, the Federal Government should take no more than a third of anybody's check.

But there is a second principle. We must understand that there are thousands of unincorporated small businesses in America and thousands of Sub S corporations that pay the highest income tax rate. And in order to stimulate the entrepreneurial spirit of America, in order to encourage capital formation in small businesses, it makes sense to drop the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent.

I know the advocates—I can already hear some of the voices of the advocates for big Government, the folks that want to keep your money in Washington to expand the size of the Government. They're going to say, "Oh, this is only for the rich." Well, first of all, we're going to reject class warfare. Secondly, we don't believe in targeting some people in or some people out. We believe everybody who pays taxes ought to get tax relief. Thirdly, ours is a philosophy that says we know Government's role is not to create wealth but to create an environment in which entrepreneurs and small businesses can realize their dreams in America. Fifthly, we understand the marriage penalty is unfair, and we'd better do something about it. And those of us who have spent some time in the agricultural sector and in the heartland understand how unfair the death penalty is—the death tax is, and we need to get rid of it. I don't want to get rid of the death penalty—[*laughter*]—just the death tax.

There is a lot of talk about how this plan, it really isn't going to affect people. Today the Ojedas are with us, Tony and Cynthia, and I want to thank you all for coming. And I appreciate the patience of your children. [*Laughter*] As you can see, they are proud parents of three children. Right now, last year, they paid $3,170 in Federal income taxes. Under our plan—a plan that benefits everybody who pays taxes, a plan where the greatest percentage of tax relief goes to the people at the bottom end of the economic ladder, a plan

that is eminently fair, a plan that doesn't affect the size of the Federal Government in a negative way, a plan that helps meet priorities—these folks will save $2,120.

Oh, I know that doesn't sound like a lot of money to folks that are rolling in dough. But $2,120 means a lot to the Ojeda family. It means a lot when you're paying high energy bills. It means a lot when you are worried about the education of your three children. It means a lot when you want to save. It means a lot when you want to do your duty as a mom and a dad to prepare for your children's future. No, $2,120 is a significant amount of money. It's the right thing to do for America.

Now, we've submitted the people's budget to Congress. It's a budget that sets priorities, a budget that pays down debt, a budget that worries about the future, but a budget that keeps in mind the fact that our people are overtaxed. And I am here asking Congress to give you a refund.

Audience members. Refund! Refund!

The President. I want to thank you all for coming out. It is so refreshing to travel the—to travel your streets and to see people come out. I know there is an overflow room here of a thousand people, and I want to thank you all for coming.

I want to tell you there is something bigger, though, than just a legislative agenda at hand. It is truly the greatness of the country. My job is to remind all of us that responsibility begins at home, that the biggest job, if you happen to be fortunate enough to be a mom or a dad, your biggest job is not your day job; your biggest job is your 24-hour job of loving your children with all your heart and all your soul. That's the best thing all of us can do.

The best thing all of us can do in this Nation, whether our job is President or Boy Scout leader or Sunday school teacher or teacher, is to teach our youngsters the difference between right and wrong, is to encourage them to be responsible for the decisions they make in life, is to make sure that every child, regardless of how he or she are born, knows somebody cares for them, somebody loves them.

No, the great strength of this country, the great strength of this country can be found in the heartland of America, where neighbor turns to neighbor and says, "What can I do to help you, neighbor," if you've got a problem, where there are thousands of people saying, "I want to help somebody in need," coming out of our churches and synagogues and mosques.

My job—my job is not only to argue and work to get a legislative agenda passed that will help Americans help themselves. My job is also to remind America how great we are, that we're a blessed nation, a nation indivisible under God, the greatest nation on the face of the Earth.

Together—together we can help this Nation fulfill its greatest promise, where every child realizes the American experience is meant for them, where every child can learn to read, where moms and dads understand the top priority is to love their children.

No, the greatness of this country is ahead of us. We've been great in the past, but the future has never been brighter. And the future has never been brighter—the future has never been brighter because the people of this country have never been greater. It is my honor to be your President.

Thank you for coming, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:46 p.m. in Mancuso Hall at the Omaha Civic Center. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Hal J. Daub of Omaha; Gov. Mike Johanns and Lt. Gov. Dave Maurstad of Nebraska; and Governor Johanns' wife, Stephanie.

Exchange With Reporters in Council Bluffs, Iowa
February 28, 2001

Earthquake in Washington State

Q. Mr. President, any reaction to the earthquake news?

The President. I talked to the FEMA Director. He is on top of it. He is gathering all the information. He is in touch with the officials in the State of Washington. I think the Governor is on an airplane now, but as soon as he lands, we'll be in touch. Then we will assess whatever damage, and we will provide whatever resources are necessary to help the people.

Q. When were you told?

The President. I was told in Omaha.

Q. Do you have a message for the people of Washington?

The President. Well, God bless, obviously. Anything we can do to help, we will do so.

Q. Can you talk about your contingency plan as part of your budget outline and how this——

The President. Well, we've got money set aside for emergencies such as these.

NOTE: The exchange began at approximately 2:35 p.m. at the Old Carnegie Library. In his remarks, the President referred to Gov. Gary Locke of Washington. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks at a Leadership Forum in Council Bluffs
February 28, 2001

The President. Well, thank you, Bill, very much. I want to thank our panelists. It's kind of family day here. [*Laughter*] Speaker, it's good to see you, sir. I've enjoyed campaigning with you here. I've spent a lot of quality time here in the great State of Iowa, and I'm glad to be back.

I will say one thing as an aside, that I never met a more kind group of people than the good people of Iowa. Even if they weren't for you, they were kind. But I really—I have fond memories of traveling to your great State, and I want to thank the good citizens of Council Bluffs for welcoming me back here again.

Let me talk a little bit about the budget. Because in order to get a budget passed, the President must count on the people. My speech last night was really not to Members of the House and the Senate; my speech last night was to the people of America. It was a great opportunity for me to go around, or through the process, however you want to look at it, and go directly to people who had an interest in their Government.

Before I begin, though, I'm also mindful that I'll get nothing done unless I get something through the House and the Senate. And we've got three House Members traveling with us today, people who I respect a lot: one, your current Congressman Greg Ganske; Tom Latham; and Jim Leach. They flew down and reminded me the entire way down how important the issues are to Iowa, issues like ethanol. [*Laughter*]

I said it—when I told them on the way down, when I said I support ethanol, I meant it. I supported it in the caucuses; I supported it in the general election; and I support the use of ethanol as the President of the United States. Now that we've gotten the ethanol issue straight, let me talk about the budget.

There's a lot of myths about the budget. One myth is, you can't have tax relief because somebody's not going to get their Social Security check, or you can't have tax relief because we'll never pay down debt. The facts are that if we have a fiscally sound approach to spending your money, we can meet priorities; we can pay down debt; we can set aside contingency funds for the unknown; and we can have tax relief. Those are the facts.

It starts with slowing down the rate of discretionary spending. In our budget, there are entitlement programs that are going to trigger spending, whether or not we—the Congress has no say, because people are entitled to money; they'll get the money. Social Security, for example, it set aside all the payroll tax for Social Security. Medicare is taken care of in the budget. We double the Medicare budget over the next 10 years. Discretionary spending like education, it will go up under my plans. [*Applause*] And it's right that it does go up. I'm glad to know there's a ground swell for support. [*Laughter*]

I want to tell you, though, even though I have a Washington address, I strongly believe in local control of schools. Of all States that understands local control of schools, Iowa is such a State. I believe we ought to pay our folks who wear the uniform in the military more money, and my budget does that. We've set aside priorities.

But instead of increasing the rate of growth in the budget, discretionary part of the budget, like they did in the last Congress, we slow it down to 4 percent—a rate greater than the rate of inflation, however. And as a result of being fiscally sound with money, it is amazing what we can do beyond just spending.

We can pay down $2 trillion of debt over the next 10 years. My budget does so; I'm confident the Congress will support me to do so. People say, "Why don't you pay down more?" Because that's all the debt that's available to pay down in a 10-year period of time unless you want to prepay debt, which will cost taxpayers money. That's the debt that becomes due in a 10-year period of time.

And so we set aside money for discretionary spending and priorities. We save and strengthen Social Security. We've got money for Medicare. We pay down debt, and we set aside $1 trillion over 10 years for contingencies.

People say, "What do you mean by that?" Well, there's emergencies. Right now, for example, there is an earthquake in the State of Washington that may require emergency spending, and let us hope that it doesn't create much damage nor take anybody's life. But it's a serious earthquake. I just called the FEMA Director to stay in touch with the emergency office to make sure that we're on top of it, and we are.

The agricultural sector may need emergency spending or contingency spending. As we transition to a free market world, there are some transition costs, costs that we've been paying in the past. We may have to pay it again this year. As we reconfigure our military, we may require more spending. Medicare may require more spending to make sure it fully works properly.

But there's a contingency of a trillion dollars set aside. And there's still money left over. That's the thing a lot of the proponents for big Government don't want you to hear—that if we're wise and pay down debt and have a contingency, there's still money.

And the big debate is going to be what to do with it. I believe that once we set priorities and fund them, we ought to remember who pays the bills in the first place. This surplus is not the Government's money. It's not, we're going to spend money as if it's the Government's money. It's the people's money. And I believe we ought to listen to the people of America and share that money with the people who pay the bills.

And there's compelling reasons to do so at this point in our history. One, energy bills are high, and it's beginning to affect the pocketbooks of a lot of working people. Two, there's a lot of talk about national debt, and that's fine, but there's a lot of consumer debt in America. And we've got to worry about people being able to handle their own consumer debt. The energy crisis, coupled with consumer debt, may make it hard for a lot of the working people to meet their needs. And I'm worried about that.

I'm worried about Government debt. But I think it makes sense to worry about the debt on the people of America, as well. I'm worried about the fact that our economy is sputtering. Today, evidently, Alan Greenspan testified that the warning clouds on the horizon are getting darker and darker. I think what we need to have is good monetary policy coupled with good fiscal policy in order to make sure we recover. And part of good fiscal policy says, let's give people money back so they can spend it. They can manage their own budgets to help kick-start the economy.

So there's a compelling reason for tax relief at this point in our Nation's history. Not only can we afford it, it makes good policy sense to do so.

And finally, it gives us a chance to reform the Tax Code. The death tax is unfair. It's unfair to farmers; it is unfair to small-business people; it's unfair to people of accumulated assets, and we ought to eliminate the death tax. The marriage penalty is unfair—the marriage penalty is unfair. I think we ought to reduce all rates. There's a lot of talk in Washington, "Well, we will decide who gets tax relief"—it's called targeted tax cuts. My view is, Government ought not to try to target anybody in or target anybody out. The only fair thing to do is, to say if you pay taxes, you get relief.

We dropped the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent, which makes the code more fair, particularly when you couple it with the fact that we're going to double the child credit from $500 to $1,000. It makes it easier for people who work hard to access the middle class. And that's important. The Tax Code should not penalize hard work. It ought to reward hard work, particularly for people who are struggling to get ahead.

It also drops the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent, which ignites the great outcry of class warfare. One of the things I've worked hard to do is to try to change the tone in Washington, to change an attitude that tends to pit groups of people against each other. That's not the way to have a debate. The truth of the matter is, by dropping the top rate from 39.6 percent to 33 percent, we understand this fact: The role of Government is not to create wealth but an environment in which the entrepreneur or the small-business person can flourish.

Many small-business people are unincorporated. Many small-business people are Subchapter S type corporations and, therefore, pay the higher rate. And by dropping the top rate from 39 percent to 33 percent, we provide an environment for capital accumulation, particularly in the small-business sector of the United States. It makes sense.

And so, given the opportunity to make a case for the tax relief plan, as you can see, I'm going to grab it at every possible moment. It is important for me to travel the country, which I'm going to do, and make the case. I made it last night in the Congress. I'm going to make the case all across America. I did so today in Nebraska and Pennsylvania. I'm obviously doing so here in Iowa. I'm off to Arkansas after this, and then I'll be in Georgia tomorrow, because—and the reason I'm doing so is because this is the people's business. It's the people's business.

And if you are interested in helping effect change, then e-mail your Senators and Congressmen. [*Laughter*] I'm sure Ganske doesn't need to hear from me. I'm positive he'll be with me all the way. [*Laughter*]

But just in case—and so I'm not talking about you, Congressman Ganske, but somebody might get a little nervous out there—[*laughter*]—because they're listening too much to the people who want to grow the Federal Government.

And therefore, if you agree, and I hope you do, I would like your help. So Bill, thank you very much for giving me a chance to come and make my case to the good folks of Council Bluffs, and I would be glad to hear from you.

[*At this point, moderator Bill Ballenger opened the forum.*]

Jeff Ballenger. Mr. President, there also seems to be a public perception that the tax cuts that we're leaning towards will just benefit the wealthy. And this is a big-time, as you would say, serious misperception. [*Laughter*]

The President. It was actually my Vice President who said that. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Ballenger. Okay. My apologies.

The President. I said something worse. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Ballenger. Well, I'm sure this is one that you and the staff will have to work on to overcome, based on some of the pundits, what they're saying. But from a third-generation businessman who would like to continue on the family legacy, I would like to say—I would like to express my support for you with your debt reduction, your elimination of the death tax, and also your reduction of income tax.

The President. Well, I appreciate you saying that. I think that the class warfare debate has kind of worn itself out. I believe that. I think the American people are going to reject that debate, pitting so-called rich against poor. I hope so. We can have a much more constructive debate without trying to pit groups of people against each other. And so I hope that the dialog won't be—the truth of the matter is, the debate is bigger Government versus smaller Government, efficient Government versus big Government.

I want to tell you all something as people who have to run budgets in your business. At the end of the last session, there was over 5,000 one-time expenditures in the budget. It was like a bidding contest to see how you get out of town. The more money was spent, the earlier you got to leave, it seemed like. And it's going to require a different mentality to say, let's set priorities.

Small-business people, any type of businessperson understands the need to set priorities. And let's fund the priorities. And I know there's a lot of politics in the budget sometimes, but it's going to be important to me to keep the politics out of it and insert the people. And we're going to get it done, too, by the way.

Moderator. Donna, would you be willing to kind of enter into this discussion?

Donna Grote. Mr. President, approximately 14 years ago I had the privilege of having lunch with your mother when she was here in Council Bluffs.

The President. You had lunch with the A-team. [*Laughter*]

Ms. Grote. I very much admired her, and she was largely responsible for my votes for your father and for you.

[*The forum continued.*]

Ms. Grote. Mr. President, I have had a lot of children and grandchildren go through my house, and I know that if there are cookies left on the table, they will be eaten. [*Laughter*] If we leave any extra money in Washington, don't you think it will be spent? [*Laughter*]

The President. That's right. I appreciate that. I think I might start using that. [*Laughter*] Thank you very much.

[*The forum continued.*]

The President. Let me—a couple of points. One, the surest way to frighten people in any kind of budget debate is to say you're not going to get your Social Security check. Sometimes, that happens to creep into the language of a political campaign,

if you know what I mean. [*Laughter*] The facts are that both Republicans and Democrats agree that we're not going to touch the Social Security money for anything other than Social Security.

Now, as I mentioned last night, a very important part of the Social Security dialog is to be to figure out how to make sure it works in the future. People who have retired or near retirement are going to be in fine shape in the Social Security system. There's a lot of money in the Social Security Trust. The fundamental question is, what happens to younger workers, younger workers who have to pay enough in the system to take care of baby boomers like me and you?

And one of the things I proposed last night was to put a commission together to study alternatives. And one of the alternatives has got to be to allow younger workers, at their choice—at their choice—to take some of their own money through the payroll taxes and put it into safe investment vehicles that will earn a better rate of return than the current paltry 2 percent that the Social Security system earns today.

So I appreciate so very much your concern about making sure your mom and dad have got a safe retirement system. The fundamental question, however, is not your mom and dad; it is your sons and daughters, whether or not there will be a system available for them.

In terms of Medicare, that is a legitimate question for your mom and dad, and it's one that I ask, as well. And we double the Medicare budget over a 10-year period of time. But—or, and—we better make sure the system is responsive to the needs of Medicare recipients.

The old system, the system was designed for an old way of medicine, where people—where prescription drugs, for example, wasn't that important a part of the medical profession. Prescription drugs were around, but they weren't the—didn't replace health care given by doctors, for example. Prescription drugs are an incredibly important part of satisfying seniors' needs today.

But the system hasn't changed, and therefore, what we need to do is modernize the system. And by that, I mean we've got to give seniors a variety of options from which to choose, all of which include prescription drugs.

And that's going to be an important part of the Medicare debate. So it's one thing to make sure there's money in the budget to take care of Medicare. The other question, though, is, are we going to have the will necessary to change the system to take care of seniors? And the fundamental choice is going to be, do we trust seniors to make decisions for themselves? Do we trust them to be able to go into the marketplace, if they so choose, and pick out a plan that meets their needs?

So those are two incredibly important debates. The opponents of any tax relief—responsible tax relief—are going to argue that somebody is going to suffer: a Medicare recipient will suffer; a Social Security recipient will suffer. It's just not the case.

And that's why I'm going to continue traveling the country making sure everybody hears that. And I appreciate you all giving me a chance to do so today.

[*The forum continued.*]

The President. Thank you all for coming. I look forward to thanking you in person.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:04 p.m. at the Old Carnegie Library. In his remarks, he referred to Speaker of the House Brent Siegrist, Iowa General Assembly. Participants included Jeff Ballenger, local automotive dealer and son of the moderator, and Donna Grote, homemaker and small-business owner.

Remarks in Little Rock, Arkansas, on the Earthquake in Washington State
February 28, 2001

I want to say something about what's taken place in Seattle today. I send my prayers and express our country's concern for our fellow citizens in Seattle, Tacoma, and Olympia—areas of the State of Washington. Those folks were affected by a major earthquake today. Our prayers are with those who were injured and their families, and with the many thousands of people whose lives have been disrupted.

Thousands of people in Washington are without power or phone service. Airports are closed, and many buildings have sustained structural damage. My administration stands ready to help in any way we can. I've asked the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Joe Allbaugh, to travel to Seattle to offer our assistance. He is on his way in a couple of hours, and he'll be traveling with members of the—Washington State's congressional delegation.

I've talked to Director Allbaugh. He told me he felt like Senator Murray would be going. And they're reaching out to other members of the congressional delegation to travel with him. We will work with State and local officials to provide whatever help we can to the people of the State of Washington.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:20 p.m. at Adams Field airport.

Question-and-Answer Session at Lakewood Elementary School in North Little Rock, Arkansas
March 1, 2001

The President. Anybody got any questions for me?

President's Goals

Student. When our kids grow up and read about your Presidency in history books, what do you hope they'll read?

The President. Well, I hope they read that our country, our politicians are able to discuss differences in a civil way; that there's not a lot of anger in the political process; that you and I might disagree, but we can respect each other when we disagree. So I hope I've been able to help change the tone in Washington so people respect each other. I hope the reading test scores are the best in the world. I hope the world is at peace. I hope that boys and girls who dreamed about owning their own business will be able to do so in America, continue to do so. I hope that our Nation is one in which people who have dreams—regardless of where you're raised, whether you can speak English, whether your parents speak English as a first language or not, no matter what neighborhood you're from—will realize those dreams are possible if you make the right choices in life. So that's my ambitions for the country.

Decision To Run for President

Student. What made you run for President?

The President. Well, I thought I could do a better job than anybody else that was running for President. I was concerned about a country that was becoming too bitter at times. I'm concerned that the American Dream, the idea that you can be—have a dream and work hard to achieve

it might not have—is bright for everybody in America, as I hoped. I'm worried that the education system in some places isn't working, concerned about a military that—the morale in the military wasn't high enough. I think we need to have a strong military to keep the peace. So I had some reasons for running, and now I'm working to achieve them.

One of the reasons I've come to your school is to be able to talk about education. I'm also talking about a budget plan. One of the things a President does is submit a budget to Congress—"Here's where we ought to spend money, here's where we ought to"—and if you have any money left over, I'm arguing we ought to give it back to the people who pay taxes, like the teacher right here.

Now, one other thing my wife is going to do, by the way, is she's going to go around the country encouraging people such as yourself to think about being a teacher when you get older. There's nothing more important than being a teacher. So as you start to think about your ambitions and your possible careers when you get out of college, think about being a teacher. It's a very important profession.

The White House

Student. What is it like being President and living in the White House?

The President. It's a big honor. It's a big honor, as I'm sure you can imagine. It's a very exciting job. The White House is a majestic place. It's like a museum in many ways, and we're, of course, now turning parts of the White House into our home. And Laura and I are the proud parents of 19-year-old twin daughters, but they go to college so we don't see much of them anymore. But we do have two dogs and a cat living with us. And so all five of us are adjusting to our new home. But it's an honor.

And I hope some day you'll come up to Washington and tour the White House, and you'll get to see where we live. It's a big honor.

Sam Houston Elementary School

Student. What school did you go to when you were our age?

The President. Sam Houston Elementary School in Midland, Texas. I was raised—you know where Texas is, of course. Most people in Arkansas know where Texas is, and all the people in Texas know where Arkansas is. Anyway, it's the State right south of here. But I lived in the western part of the State. Many people in Arkansas have got kinfolks generally in east Texas, and I lived out in west Texas. That's where I lived. And so I went to a place called Sam Houston Elementary School.

And I had no idea when I was your age that I would run for President of the United States. I, frankly, thought that what I wanted to be at the time is, I wanted to be a baseball player just like a guy named Willie Mays. He was my favorite player growing up. Then I realized I wasn't a very good hitter, so I wasn't going to be like Willie Mays.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:58 a.m. in classroom 15. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Leadership Forum in North Little Rock
March 1, 2001

The President. Well, thank you very much, Kaye. First, a good school depends upon the leadership of a good principal, and it didn't take me long to recognize,

one, this is a good school, and two, Kaye Lowe is a good principal.

I want to thank our panelists for coming. It's—I really love going to schools and seeing the enthusiasm of the teachers and the bright eyes of the students. That certainly was the case here today.

Before I begin, I want to thank the leadership of the State of Arkansas for coming: two fine United States Senators, Senator Hutchinson and Senator Lincoln. I want to thank Vic Snyder for being here, as well.

Governor, I've got a message for you—and Lieutenant Governor. You requested that the FEMA look at the ability—possibility of the Government funding 100 percent of the costs of the debris cleanup here as a result of those ice storms that hit Arkansas. Today, sir, I've got a letter for you funding—to provide 100 percent funding from the Federal Government for the State of Arkansas.

I've got also a—well, a very positive budget message, too, for the people of Arkansas. First, it starts with setting priorities. I want to spend a little time, and then I promise to let other people talk. But it's important for America to hear that the budget I submitted is one that is a realistic and reasonable budget, one that sets priorities.

One thing that our governments must do is set priorities. Without priorities, there is haphazard spending. The job of a President is to set clear priorities. A priority of mine is public education. It was a priority of mine as the Governor of the State of Texas. It is a priority of mine as the President. I understand, however, that even though it is a priority, that does not mean Washington, DC, should run public schools. And so I look forward to working with Members of the Congress to pass power out of Washington to provide flexibility so local jurisdictions can help design the strategies necessary to make sure that every child in America gets educated.

Secondly, we are spending more money, and that's important. However, there needs to be a results-oriented approach to the expenditure of money, whether it be Federal money, State money, or local money. The cornerstone for reform, the whole concept of making sure no child gets left behind, rests upon strong accountability systems.

One reason we came to this school is because this is a school that's not afraid to measure. It's a school, by the way, that not only measures but does not view a measurement system as a way to punish somebody. They view a measurement system as a way to diagnose problems early and correct them early, so that no child is left behind.

And so we'll have a wide-ranging discussion here about education. And it's an important discussion to have. But I want to put it in the context of an overall budget.

Part of the priorities of a budget is to make sure we can keep the peace, so I have prioritized paying our soldiers more money in order to boost morale. I have prioritized setting aside all the money designed for Social Security to only be spent on Social Security. I'm confident that both Republicans and Democrats will hear that cry, that the days of using Social Security monies to pay other programs has ended. The Medicare budget doubles. And that's important, but we also have got to have Medicare reform so that seniors have got options from which to choose. All options will include prescription drugs.

So the budget sets priories. Medicare is a priority. Social Security is a priority. Education is a priority. The defense of our people are priorities. Everybody else is going to have different priorities; trust me. I heard some last night from the able Senator. But that's how the system works. My job is to set clear priorities, and I have done so.

A second priority is to pay down debt. There's a lot of discussion about debt at the national level, and we ought to pay down debt. This budget pays down $2 trillion of debt. Now people say, "Why don't

you pay down more?" Well, it doesn't make any sense to pay off bonds before they retire, before they come due. It's a reasonable approach; it makes eminent sense to do it this way.

We also have got money set aside for contingencies. There's a trillion dollars over 10 years for contingencies. That's a smart thing to do, and we've done that. A contingency—somebody says, "What do you mean by contingencies?" Well, emergencies are contingencies. We may have another bad situation for our agricultural sector, in which case we need contingency money. And so there's a trillion set aside for contingencies.

And so we've set priorities. And we'll argue about whether or not the priorities are the right priorities. Some of them are going to say up there, "Well, you know, he didn't put enough in for education," or "He didn't put enough in for the military, didn't put enough in for here or there." Those are sometimes—are the people who aren't responsible for viewing the budget in its entirety. And that's okay. Everybody's entitled to an opinion, and there's a lot of them in Washington.

But I just want to assure you that the budget I submitted, it sets priorities, pays down debt, has a contingency fund, and there is still money left over. And I'm going to argue vociferously, any time anybody will listen, that at this point in our Nation's history, the wise thing to do with that money is to remember who paid it in the first place and let the payers keep the money.

I believe that tax relief ought to go to everybody who pays taxes. I don't like the idea of the Federal Government saying, "Well, we're going to pick and choose who the winners are. You're targeted in, and you're targeted out." To me that is not fair, and that's not the right way to approach tax relief. If you pay taxes, you ought to get relief. I do agree with the critics who believe that the people at the bottom end of the economic ladder ought to get the highest percentage of relief. And my plan does that. It cuts all taxes for everybody. We drop all rates, including the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent, and increase the child credit from $500 to $1,000 per child. We lessen the harsh effects of the marriage penalty, and we eliminate the death tax. That's the basic plan.

Stephen Benson is here, a parent of two and proud husband of Shelia, for a reason, because he's a taxpayer. He pays $4,620 in Federal income taxes. Under this plan, in which everybody who pays taxes will get relief, he saves $1,710. That's above the national average for a family of four, which is 1,600.

Now you will hear people say, "Well, that's not much money." Well, that's a lot of money if you're paying higher energy bills, and folks who work across America are paying higher energy bills. It's a lot of money if you've got consumer debt. And there's a lot of discussion about national debt, and there should be. And as I mentioned, we're doing the best we can to pay $2 trillion of national debt. But Washington, DC, folks, needs to understand, there's a lot of people who have got consumer debt, as well. And the idea of substantial tax relief after we meet priorities will help people like the Bensons manage their own debt. It's one thing to be focused on the national balance sheet. The President needs and the Congress needs to pay attention to the people's individual balance sheets, and that's exactly what this tax relief plan does.

So I appreciate so very much the opportunity to not only make the case for education reform. And this school gets it. And evidently you get it, too, Governor, because the idea of insisting upon accountability as the cornerstone for reform makes eminent sense. We'll argue about the remedies for failure, we'll argue about what the consequences for failure are, but the truth of

the matter is, the whole reform system begins by measuring, by holding people accountable, by holding up success so that we know whether or not the reading curriculum that has been put in place here works. The principal assures me it does, and the reason she's able to say so with certainty is because you measure. And therefore, another school that may have trouble cheating—treating their children how to read will be able to say, "Well, let's see how they do it here." We can prove that it works.

And so thanks for giving me a chance to come and also talk about the budget. It's going to be on people's minds for a while, until it gets passed. I will assure you, I'm going to try and keep it on people's minds.

[*At this point, the forum proceeded.*]

The President. I appreciate that. There's a woman—a reading czarina in Houston named Phyllis Hunter. She said one of the most profound thoughts of anybody in recent history, I think. She said, "Reading is the new civil right." That's a pretty powerful statement. And it sounds like you all are right on track here. I want to thank you very much for what you're doing.

I also want a—another piece of public policy I'm going to work with the Congress on is to make sure that Head Start is—incorporates a reading curriculum that will do precisely what you said, that will teach—give children the necessary tools to become good readers when they make it into K or first grade.

Thank you very much for what you're doing here.

[*The forum continued.*]

Arkansas Department of Education Director Raymond Simon. Mr. President, one thing that I worry about on your program is the fact that it's based on common sense. [*Laughter*] So I think you're in for a hard road.

The President. You may be right. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Simon. But that having been said, the commonsense approach, we believe, mirrors exactly what we're about in Arkansas, flexibility at the local level. We've insisted in our State, through an initiative called Smart Start, which you may have heard of——

The President. I have heard of that.

Mr. Simon. Our K–4 initiative and Smart Step that we've advanced in the fifth through the eighth grade, we've made standards and accountability non-negotiable. But we have made negotiable how the schools get there.

Your program does exactly that. I credit you, and I applaud you for your interest in parents and strengthening the family, in character education. Our teachers oftentimes feel unsupported at that level, and your programs are going to help them get that support they need.

The President. Thank you.

Mr. Simon. We do believe that flexibility in spending is almost as important as more money. Certainly, we can use additional funds, but more important to us is flexibility. We've been able to do much with Smart Start in our State, not with huge amounts of money but with refocusing on what's important.

The President. You bet. Well, I appreciate that. I want you all to know that when we talk about accountability in Washington, at least when I do, the Federal Government will not design and administer a national test. The people of Arkansas are plenty capable about designing your own test and your own accountability system.

We'll hear the debates, and I can already hear them already, starting on the floor of the House and the Senate about how Washington, DC, insisting that schools measure in return for money will mean that it's going to undermine local control of schools. As they say in Arkansas, that is hogwash. [*Laughter*] That's not reality—

that's not reality. It's just like saying, "Accountability systems are racist." What's racist is not to have an accountability system, because what generally happens is, inner-city kids just get moved through. It's so much easier to quit on a child, so much easier. And what accountability systems do, designed at the local level, they say, "We're not going to leave any child behind, because we're going to measure early. And when we find failure, we're going to do something about it. We're not going to accept failure in American schools."

And so thank you very much for your comments. And guess what, common sense will prevail. [*Laughter*]

Principal Kaye Lowe. Mr. Benson, we'd like to hear from you as a parent.

Stephen Benson. Well, I was really excited about the tax cut.

The President. Say that again, Mr. Benson, as loud as you can. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Benson. Well, that money that I save—my priority is education for my children. I was going to put that money toward education, but I could put it towards something else because I know here at Lakewood Elementary, Ms. Lowe and her staff are doing great things to make sure my son has a quality education. And with the spending that you are proposing for the school, I'm just excited to see what Ms. Lowe and her staff has in store for my son for a quality education.

And as far as testing and standards, I have to agree with you wholeheartedly on that. My daughter and I have a conference once a week to measure her standard at her school in North Little Rock High School.

The President. Oh really? I was there.

Mr. Benson. So we emphasize standards, making sure we stay on the right level in our household.

The President. Well, that's great.

Mr. Benson. I'm really excited about all that you're doing.

The President. Thank you, sir. One thing about measuring—what you said just triggered me. You have meetings with the school officials, based upon accountability. It is so important for us to not only measure but, to use a fancy word, disaggregate results, so that we're able to begin to individualize the systems around the country.

And that's going to be an incredibly important component of the reform, that we say each child matters and therefore the accountability systems must reflect the performance of each child, not kind of groups, collections of children. And the systems will then begin to emerge to individualize education.

Today we went to a computer lab, where the reading programs were constantly adjusting based upon the skill level of the participant on the computer. It's the forerunner of the individualization of education, the likes of which a lot of us have not imagined here before. It begins with an accountability system that measures on a per-child basis, so when we get up to Washington, we cannot let the whole concept of accountability be undermined by not—by a system that does not measure on an individual child basis. And that's exactly what I'm going to insist happens.

[*The forum continued.*]

The President. You know, there's a lot of debate about English as a second language programs. And my attitude—obviously in the State of Texas we have a lot of people whose parents don't speak English as a first language. And my attitude was this: First of all, in our Nation, we must support what's called English Plus—English is the language of the country, plus we respect other languages; secondly, that the best way to determine whether bilingual programs or English second language programs are working is to measure.

There's a huge debate about immersion versus programs as *puentas para Ingles*—bridges to English. And the best way to determine what works is to say, here is the goal, which is English proficiency, and let's measure the systems that work. That

helps take the politics out of the debate about teaching children English. The goal is English; that's how people are going to get ahead in America. And the best way to approach the subject is to say, let's measure; let's be rational about how we approach these programs. And I appreciate you're—where were you raised in Texas?

Teacher Maria Touchstone. I was raised in Galena Park, right outside of Houston.

The President. Yes, the Fighting Yellow Jackets.

Ms. Touchstone. Yes. [*Laughter*]

[*The forum continued.*]

The President. Well, I appreciate that. The superintendent's right, that the reading initiative ought to help and make sure kids get to the appropriate level early in their careers. I will urge Congress to provide flexibility to States to be able to use some of the prescriptive Federal dollars to apply to IDEA, if that's what the State chooses to do.

There's $1.6 billion of so-called construction money, the rules of which have not been written. I think one of the things that would make sense is to increase the amount of that money from 25 percent to 100 percent, to allow the States to use the IDEA—that money for IDEA, if that is what's best in the interest of the budget of the State.

I know the Congress sometimes doesn't like to provide flexibility for folks at the State level. But here is a good way—now, it's going to be hard to achieve huge funding for IDEA. But I—and one way to do so is to take some of the prescriptive programs and allow flexibility at the State level. And I'm going to work with Congress, hopefully that they'll see the wisdom of that way, and hear—and by the way, the more money that goes into IDEA, the more local property tax money is freed up to meet specific construction needs, if need be.

And so I think one of the ways to try to get the number up toward the 40 percent that was promised by the Federal Government years ago, is to be—is to have a commonsense approach, Raymond, and to give flexibility—well, I appreciate that, Jim. The reading program will help. It will help make sure the children get a good start on their education early. And so will the Head Start program, and the Head Start initiative.

Principal Lowe. Mr. President, I'm sad to say that we're out of time. But again, I want to thank you so much for coming to Lakewood Elementary, and discussing——

The President. It's a huge honor to be here. Thank you all for being here.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:40 a.m. in the cafetorium at Lakewood Elementary School. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Vic Snyder; Gov. Mike Huckabee and Lt. Gov. Winthrop Rockefeller of Arkansas; and James Smith, school superintendent, North Little Rock School District. The President also referred to IDEA, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Remarks at Fernbank Museum of Natural History in Atlanta, Georgia
March 1, 2001

The President. Thank you very much. I'm glad I came to Georgia.

Thanks so much for that warm welcome, Vernon. It's great to be here in De Kalb County. It is great to be introduced by one of the rising stars in De Kalb County, one of the rising stars in the State of Georgia. Vernon Jones is a good man—he's a good man. And I'm proud—I'm proud to have been introduced by him.

I'm also proud to share the stage with both Republican and Democrat elected officials here from Georgia, who are sending an interesting message—an interesting message, when the Georgia State Senate voted overwhelmingly to urge all the Federal elected officials from the State of Georgia to support the tax relief package that I introduced yesterday. I'm honored that Senators Starr, Dean, and Johnson would be here with me today. Both Republicans and Democrats took a look at what I proposed and realized it's fair. And I'm honored that members of the General Assembly, Westmoreland and Buck, have joined as well, one Republican and one Democrat.

See, this is not a—the budget I submitted wasn't a Republican budget; it wasn't a Democrat budget. It was the people's budget. Maybe one reason why the good folks of Georgia understand that it's a reasonable budget is because it's a common—it's a budget based on good, sound common sense. There are not a lot of things fancy about it. Maybe it's because I was raised in west Texas, and I was taught some good common sense.

I'm so proud of members of the Georgia delegation who are here, from the Federal delegation: Kingston, Deal, and Norwood, Members of the United States Congress. One member of your delegation wasn't able to be here, but I would like to read a letter from him, if you don't mind:

> Dear Mr. President,
>
> Welcome back to Georgia. I regret that I could not be with you today. I had to be in Washington for a meeting with the Department of Justice officials that was scheduled long ago, but I wanted you and my fellow Georgians to know that I am with you in spirit. I support your Tax Code proposal strongly, without any reservations. This is an overpayment of taxes, and you are correct that those who paid it know better how to spend it than the Congress. As the old Elvis Presley song goes, we should "Return to Sender."
>
> Zell Miller

I can't tell you how much I appreciate Senator Zell Miller standing up side by side with the President. Oh, I know he's a Democrat, and of course, I'm a Republican, but both of us put America first. And this budget is an American budget, because it sets priorities. It is a budget that sets important priorities, starting with the education of our children.

The largest increase of any Department in my budget goes to the Department of Education. But lest you become too concerned, I want you to hear, loud and clear, the best schools are those that are run by the local people. We strongly believe in local control of schools.

We will spend more money, but we will also insist upon reform. And the catalyst for reform, the agent for change, is to insist that States and local jurisdictions develop strong accountability systems so that we know—we know—when children are learning. If you don't measure, how do you know? If you don't measure, how can you correct problems early, before it's too late? The cornerstone of reform is local control of schools and strong accountability systems at the local level, so we can diagnose problems early, solve them early so that not one single child in America is ever left behind.

Another priority in my budget is to pay the men and women who wear the uniform more money. It is to make sure there is a high morale in the military by having better pay, better housing. But also it's important to have a Commander in Chief who will clarify the mission of the military. And the mission is to be well-prepared to fight and win war and, therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place.

A priority in the budget—a priority in the budget is to take all the payroll taxes that are supposed to go to Social Security

and make sure they only go to Social Security. Oh, I know you've heard the talk—I certainly have heard it—about how any kind of tax relief that has got any meaning to it will mean somebody is not going to get their Social Security check. That's Washington talk for "We want more of your money to stay in Washington." That's what that is. Republicans and Democrats agree that we're going to set aside all the payroll taxes for Social Security, and that's what's going to happen.

Another line you'll hear is that the elderly will suffer. Well, my budget doubles Medicare spending over 10 years. We're setting aside money to make sure we fulfill the promise to the elderly. And we've got to not only set aside money for Medicare, we must reform the system so that our seniors have got more choices, more options, all of which will include prescription drug benefits.

No, we set aside money for priorities, and we fund them. The thing that's got some people concerned, though, is we're not exploding the budget like has happened in the past. The budget was skyrocketing at the end of last year. It was much higher than the rate of inflation and higher than disposable income. Had we kept spending at that rate, we would have not only spent all the surplus, we would have had to have dipped into Social Security to meet the programs.

What this Government needs is a fiscal, responsible approach to the budgeting, the kind of budgeting that you, yourselves, do with your families. That's what the Government needs, and I'm willing to provide that kind of leadership.

So we meet priorities. We make sure Social Security is safe and secure, and we also pay down debt.

There's a lot of discussion about debt at the national level, and there should be. So part of the budget that I've sent to the Congress sets aside $2 trillion to pay down debt over the next 10 years. People say, "Why don't you pay it all off, all the national debt off?" Well, that doesn't make any sense, because not all the debt retires—comes due at the end of 10 years. We shouldn't prepay debt at a premium that will cost the taxpayers more money. Let's just retire the debt as it comes due. That's $2 trillion worth of debt.

And it also makes sense to set aside money for contingencies, which we have done. We've set aside a trillion dollars for contingencies. People say, "What kind of contingencies are you talking about?" Well, we may need some contingencies for America's farmers. Or after we end up reviewing the military—and remember in my speech, if you paid attention or at least listened—[*laughter*]—I said we're going to have our defense vision drive the budgeting, and not the other way around. And we've got to make sure that we've got a plan. And we've got to figure out what systems make sense, as we head into the 21st century. Instead of having military budget spending be based upon politics, let's have it based upon a strategic vision of how best to keep the peace, not only today but down the road. We may need money for that. And so we've got a trillion dollars set aside in contingencies.

As I tried to explain to the Congress, we increase spending, not nearly as much as they did the last time, but we increase it. We set aside money for Social Security and Medicare. We pay down debt, and we set aside contingency money. And you know what? There's still money left over. And the fundamental question is, what do we do with it? What do we do with it?

That's what's going to happen. When you have more money than you need, it seems like somebody is getting overtaxed and overcharged. And what I am going to do is remind the Congress that if we've overcharged somebody, it's time for a refund. It's time to remind people on a regular basis in Washington, the surplus is not the Government's money; the surplus is the

people's money. And now is the time. Before this money gets all spent, now is the time to send some of it back.

But it's also the time to send it back because our economy is beginning to sputter. And one of the things we can do to make sure the economy gets a second wind is to let people have money in their pockets so they can spend it. One way to make sure that people can find work who want to find work is to set priorities, set contingencies, pay down debt, and give people some of their own money back. Or how about not taking it in the first place? So we reduce the rates on everybody who pays taxes.

There are some in Washington who say, "Well, some people need to be targeted in, and some people need to be targeted out of tax relief."

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. Now, the fairest tax relief is to say, if you pay taxes, you get relief. That's the fairest way to do something. We drop all rates. We drop the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent. We drop the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent. And one of the reasons why it is important to drop the top rate is to recognize the contributions that small businesses play in America. Small business—small businesses are really the backbone of the capitalist system. The entrepreneur is a soul who dreams big and works hard to realize a dream and therefore ends up employing people. That's what the small business is all about. What I hope Congress recognizes is that many small-business folks are unincorporated, and many of them are Subchapter S, which means they pay the highest rate. And by dropping the rate, we increase the ability of small businesses to grow and to employ more Americans.

Our current Tax Code is unfair. It is unfair for folks who live on the outskirts of poverty, who are struggling to get ahead. It's unfair. It's unfair that if you're a single mother, working hard, and you're in the $22,000 range, that for every additional dollar she earns—what's unfair is, that's taxed at a higher rate than someone who is very successful.

I used to try to paint the picture during the campaign about the tollbooth in the road to the middle class. It meant people on one side of the tollbooth paid a lower marginal rate than those trying to get through. That's not what America's about, as far as I'm concerned, and I know it's not about what—as far as you're concerned.

This is a country that says, the harder you work, the more you struggle, the more likely it should be you're able to realize your dreams. No, we need to drop the bottom rate, and we need to make sure that that hard-working waitress is more likely to be able to save and dream and build.

We penalize marriage in the Tax Code, and that's not right. And the death tax is wrong. It taxes people's assets twice.

Now, this is a tax plan that is well thought out, and it's fair. As I said in my speech, some folks will say it's too big; some folks will say it's too small. We need to send the message to Republican and Democrat legislators and Senators that it is just right.

And so I'm here to ask for your help—I'm here to ask for your help. You don't have to worry about Zell Miller. You don't have to worry about these three U.S. Congressmen who are here. But there may be some other folks from the State of Georgia who might be a little nervous about the plan. I certainly hope not. We're not going to take anything for granted, though.

So if you find a Member that you may have some influence with or know an e-mail address or can figure out where to write a letter, and find out somebody isn't listening to you, to do what's right for the country, just drop them a line. I could use your help.

And if somebody argues with you, just remind them of these facts, that the average family will receive $1,600 in tax relief. That doesn't seem like a lot to some of the folks who may be doing all right, but

it's a lot to a lot of people. It's a lot to people whose energy bills have gone up because we don't have an energy policy in America. There's a lot of talk about national debt, and that's important. But there's a lot of credit card debt that are burdening people; $1,600 can help a lot; $1,600 can help set money aside for a child; $1,600 is real money. And I'm going to remind those folks again whose money it is: It's the people's money, your money.

I haven't been your President for a long period of time, but I can report that it is a fantastic experience. I can't tell you what an honor it is. I can't tell you what a high honor it is to represent the American people in Washington. That's why it's important to come out and get my batteries charged in places like De Kalb County, Georgia; to be able to look my fellow citizens in the eye and say, I know you're counting on me, but I'm counting on you, as well.

I'm counting on you, when you find a neighbor in need, to reach out a hand, and say, "What can I do, brother or sister, to help you?" I'm counting on you to run a Boy Scout troop and to teach our children right from wrong. Our Nation counts on people who have got good heart and good will to say, "What can I do to make my neighborhood a better place," instead of hoping that the Federal Government, in its infinite wisdom, waves a magic wand and there's educational excellence in every school in Georgia. We need the good citizens of these communities to get involved with public education, to make sure our teachers are supported, excellence is demanded, accountability is in place so no children are left behind. No, I'm counting on you.

The reason I'm so optimistic about America, though, is that our land is full of loving people. The great strength of the country doesn't lie in the halls of our governments; it lies in the homes of our people. The great strength of America is the fact that America is full of caring and loving, God-fearing and decent souls. And I am proud to be your President.

Thank you all for coming. God bless, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:10 p.m. in the atrium at the Fernbank Museum of Natural History. In his remarks, he referred to Vernon Jones, chief executive officer, De Kalb County; Georgia State Senators Terrell Starr, Nathan Dean, and Eric Johnson; and Georgia State Representatives Lynn Westmoreland and Thomas Buck III.

Remarks at a Leadership Forum in Atlanta
March 1, 2001

The President. Bill, thank you very much. And Lydia, thank you for the tour. This is a hospital, but it's also—it's a place full of love. And I was most touched by meeting the parents and the kids and the nurses and the docs, all of whom are working hard to save lives. I want to thank the moms who are here. Jim, thank you very much for your hospitality. And Tommy, I'll get to you in a minute. [*Laughter*]

There's a lot of talk about budgets right now, and I'm here to talk about the budget. My job as the President is to submit a budget to the Congress and to set priorities, and one of the priorities that we've talked about is making sure the health care systems are funded. And Dr. Woods talked about our commitment—and it's a joint commitment—it's a commitment I'm confident the Congress will make with me to double the NIH funding by the year 2003.

That's an important commitment of the Federal Government. You know more than me about how effective those dollars can be, and it's a wise use of Federal taxpayers' money. It means that the budget will be increased to 28 billion a year by the year 2003.

Secondly, I want to talk about two other aspects of health care before I get into how this all works. One is, we're going to double Medicare over the next 10 years from $216 billion to $549 billion. It's a significant increase of expenditures. It's $159 billion in new Medicare spending, above and beyond that which was projected. It means that our country is going to make a firm commitment to those who rely upon Medicare dollars, the elderly, the teaching hospitals. It is an important Federal commitment.

By the way, with the expenditure of Medicare money, we also have got to have the courage to reform Medicare to make it a program where seniors have got more choices and more options from which to choose to match their particular needs. And all the reforms must insist that prescription drug coverage becomes an integral part of the Medicare package.

And finally, an interesting opportunity we have in the country, as far as I'm concerned, is to increase funding for community health centers. I'd like to increase the number of community health centers from 3,000 to 4,200 over the next 5 years, doubling the number of people who will be served. Community health centers are good opportunities to take pressure off of hospital emergency rooms, for starters. They're opportunities for people to get primary care who are indigent poor, maybe newly arrived to America. It is a wise expenditure of taxpayers' money.

A point I'm trying to make to the people of Georgia and will make around the country is, the first job of a President is to set priorities. Not only are these, the items I just talked about, priorities, so is public schools. It's a priority. As a matter of fact, the largest increase in my budget is for public education.

However, I'm mindful of the fact that the Federal Government is only a partial provider of funds and should never run the schools. I strongly advocate and strongly will fight for local control of schools. One size does not fit all when it comes to the education of children.

As an aside, one of the interesting reforms that I hope we get through the Congress says two things: One, we're going to provide flexibility to local folks to run the schools; and secondly, if you receive Federal money, you must measure. You must show us whether or not children are learning to read and write and add and subtract and, if not, correct.

This is an interesting place to talk about diagnosing problems, right here in a hospital. Well, we need to do the same thing in education, particularly in the early years. We must diagnose whether or not a child has deficiencies in reading, for example, and solve them early—and solve them early. And that's the whole spirit of reform that we're proposing.

I want to pay the military more, folks. In my budget, we increase military pay by a billion dollars over the current pay. But having met all these—and set aside all the payroll taxes for Social Security—that's what we do, 2.6 trillion over 10 years will only be spent on Social Security. Now, that sounds like a lot of money, and it is, except we've got much more money than that available to figure out what to do with. And so $2 trillion will be spent to pay down debt over the next 10 years.

And people say, "Well, you need—why not more? Why not 800 billion more, or maybe a trillion more?" And the reason why is, because the debt doesn't come due over—the amount of debt that comes due in a 10-year period is 2 trillion. There is no need to pay a premium to retire debt early. It would cost taxpayers more money, and that doesn't make any sense.

We still have money left. We've got pretty good cashflows at the Federal level. And what I want to do is set aside a trillion dollars for contingencies and with the remaining money, which amounts to 1.6 trillion over 10 years, remember who paid the money in the first place.

The point I want to make in this haven of love, a place of deep concern about children's health, is that we can fund priorities. If we're wise about how we budget money, we can set aside important priorities, and we can give people some money back. And I think that's really important. I know it's important at this moment in today's—in history, because, one, our economy is sputtering. And the money—if we can accelerate a tax relief plan to people like Tommy and Cynthia and everybody else up here, it will put more money in people's pockets, which will cause them to spend, which will cause the economy to get a second wind, we hope.

Secondly, there are a lot of people paying higher energy bills than they paid in the past. It's like a tax. And I think it's wise—if we're able to prioritize and realize we have more money—to help people manage their own personal accounts, their own balance sheets. A lot of people have got consumer debt that they're worried about. And there's a lot of focus on national debt; I focus on the people's balance sheets, as well.

And so I'm confident that not only can we meet our priorities but make sure a guy like Tommy Winfield and his family, who pay $1,380 of Federal income taxes, gets relief. In his case, he will end up paying no Federal income taxes under this plan. His tax burden will go from $1,380 to zero. Now, there are some sophisticates who will say that's not very much money, but it's plenty for him.

Tommy Winfield. Mr. President, let them ask me.

The President. Let the record note, this was not rehearsed. [*Laughter*]

At any rate, I appreciate the chance to come and make my case for the budget—for the budget. And we had a great rally in De Kalb County, and it gave me an opportunity to remind people that if you're concerned about the budget and you want there to be fiscal sanity in Washington with priorities set and funded, write your Senators and your Congressmen.

I have great faith in the people of America. And coming to this hospital and seeing and feeling the love on the floor we were on, knowing there's dedicated doctors, loving nurses, spending a lot of time trying to help kids, renews my faith in the greatness of America. I told the people earlier, the great strength of this country is not because of our Government; it is because of our people. And this hospital is a living example of what I'm talking about.

So Dr. Woods, thank you for giving me a chance to come, and I'm looking forward to hearing from our other panelists.

[*At this point, the forum proceeded.*]

The President. Thanks, Tommy, I appreciate you saying that. You triggered something in my mind when you said that. Again, I want everybody to understand we've set priorities and funded them. There's a fundamental issue at stake here. And that is, do you trust Tommy to spend his own money? That's really one of the issues, if you think about it.

And I want the people of Georgia to hear loud and clear my plan trusts the Tommys of the world to make the decisions. You see, I think he—you can best decide what's best for your family, better than I can decide what's best for your family. And I shouldn't be trying to decide what's best for your family, after we meet some common needs in the country. Defense is a common need; health care, health research is a common need. Education is a common need.

Again, I just want to repeat, please don't hope that the Federal Government is going to wave a magic wand and there will be

educational excellence. As a matter of fact, it's less likely there will be educational excellence if there's power in Washington, DC, because the schools in Georgia are different in many ways from the issues that face Texas schools. And so we should not try to federalize education, but there are some things we can do by spending money wisely and insisting upon local control of schools and accountability.

After those needs are met, you're the person I want spending your own money. As a matter of fact, it's not the Government's money; it's yours to begin with. And that's kind of what I'm trying to get changed, the whole attitude about the people's money. As a matter of fact, we're not giving you any money back. As a matter of fact, I am trying to advocate that we're not going to take it in the first place, so you get to keep it. You know, we're spending on tax cuts. Well, that's kind of contradictory language, because it's your money. And anyway, it's a mindset that I'm trying to get—trying to impress upon the people.

And the best way to get this done, in my opinion, is to rally the will of the people. I've got great faith in the American people, and that's what this is all about. And so I'm so honored that you all are giving me a chance. It's an educational experience for me. It's a heartening experience for me, and it's a chance for me to move around the country, to get outside of Washington and sit face to face with real Americans who are working hard for their families, love their kids, love their country.

And so it's an honor to be here, Bill. And thank you all very much, Lydia. Thanks to the moms. I thank you for your courage and your love, and God bless you all.

Participant. Thank you, Mr. President. God bless America.

The President. Thank you. Thanks for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:17 p.m. in the auditorium of Children's Healthcare of Atlanta at Egleston. In his remarks, he referred to Bill Woods, chief medical officer, Lydia Gonzalez Ryan, clinical director, and Tommy Winfield, staff member, AFLAC Cancer and Blood Disorders Program, and Jim Tally, president and chief executive officer, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta; and Cynthia DeWild, whose son Joseph was a patient in the program.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Critical Infrastructure Protection

March 1, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to section 1053 of the Defense Authorization Act of 2001 (Public Law 106–398), enclosed is a comprehensive report detailing the specific steps taken by the Federal Government to develop critical infrastructure assurance strategies as outlined by Presidential Decision Directive No. 63 (PDD–63).

This report was drafted by the previous Administration and is a summary of their efforts as of January 15. However, since this requirement conveys to my Administration, I am forwarding the report.

Critical infrastructure protection is an issue of importance to U.S. economic and national security, and it will be a priority in my Administration. We intend to examine the attached report and other relevant

materials in our review of the Federal Government's critical infrastructure protection efforts.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,

March 1, 2001.

Remarks to the National Conference of State Legislatures
March 2, 2001

Mr. Secretary, thank you for the three introductions. [*Laughter*] When I was looking for people to serve in the Cabinet, one of the places I looked was for fellow Governors, because I strongly believe that there needs to be appropriate balance between the Federal Government and the State governments. And I found a good one in Tommy Thompson. He's going to do a great job, and I'm so honored that you're here.

I appreciate you all having me. I see some familiar faces—Mr. Speaker—I'm glad you all are here. I want to thank Senator Costa and Senator Saland for inviting me. I've got something to say about the budget, and this is a pretty darn good forum to do so.

Before I begin, though, I want to thank the folks from Quebec who are here. And where are you? There you are, sir. Thank you for being here. I'm looking forward to coming to Quebec City in April. I had a good visit with the Prime Minister of Canada the other day, and I'm confident our nations will continue our long friendship together and work together for the good of our two countries and our hemisphere. I understand we've got some folks from South Africa as well. Well, thank you all for coming. Welcome. I'm sure glad you're here. Any Texans here, speaking about foreign countries? [*Laughter*] Darn it. [*Laughter*]

One of the things that I talked about with the Governors, all of whom were here the other day, was a new federalism initiative. And my administration is going to listen to people at the State and local level to make sure we clearly define the role of Federal Government and State Governments and then have a—by Executive order, put a group together to make sure it actually happens. A lot of times in Washington, as you know, we tend to talk, and sometimes the talk isn't backed up by action. And so we're going to work hard to make sure that the new federalism becomes reality.

And it's important. Take a matter like education. One of my priorities as the Governor of Texas was education; one of my priorities as the President is to make sure every child gets educated. But I can assure you, this administration understands the importance of local control of schools. And we don't believe in the federalization of the public school system, that one size does not fit all when it comes to education.

And of course, ours is an administration that doesn't care whether your Governor or your speaker or your leader of the senate is a Republican or a Democrat; if you believe in local control of schools, you do so in a nonpartisan way. So we look forward to working with the Congress to pass power out of Washington, to make those Federal programs that are prescriptive in nature become supportive of local efforts to meet—so that each local State and district can chart their own path to excellence for children.

One of the reforms that I think that is going to be crucial is to work with States

and local jurisdictions to develop strong accountability systems, that in return for Federal money that you must show us whether or not children are learning to read and write and add and subtract.

We will not have a national test. A test devised at the national level will undermine local control of schools. But I think it's a perfectly appropriate question to say, for example, with disadvantaged students, those with Title I money, that—measure—measure on an annual basis. You develop the standards; you develop the test; but show not only the President but show everybody else whether or not the schools are meeting the objectives. And if they are, we'll praise teachers like we should all across the country. But if not, instead of just accepting the status quo, if it's okay to shuffle kids through the system who can't read, it will serve as a catalyst to change.

And this is a substantial reform. On one side, you'll have people say, "Well this is not the proper role of the Federal Government, to insist that local jurisdictions show us whether or not children are learning." I reject that argument. We're a results-oriented nation. And there's no better—no important place to find positive results than in our public schools and no important place to find negative results and correct them early than in our public schools.

And they're going to hear people say, "Well, it's racist to test." Listen, I went through this argument in the State of Texas. It is racist not to test. It is important to test, because we believe all children can learn, and therefore, when we find certain children not learning, let's correct it. See, the attitude is, "If certain kids can't learn, let's just not hold people accountable; let's just quit and move them through the system." That's unacceptable to me. I know it's unacceptable to you. I believe it's going to be unacceptable to both Republicans and Democrats in the Congress. The cornerstone of reform is flexibility at the local level, coupled with strong accountability measures.

Many of you all know the debates oftentimes, on important matters like education, revolve around who spends the most money. And the truth of the matter is, the Federal Government's got a limited role when it comes to the expenditure of taxpayers' money in public schools. I mean, we fund about 7 percent of the total budgets across the Nation.

But there is an important role for the Federal Government, particularly for disadvantaged children. And so we've increased our education budget by more than any other Department in the Federal Government. The debate here of course will be, "Well, it's not enough." But for those who argue that, sometimes they're not—they don't have to do what the executive branch does, which is to present an overall budget, to make it work. And that's what I want to explain to you all, how our overall budget works.

First, there was a contest at the end of the last session to figure out who could spend the most money. It didn't matter what your party was, it looked like. The budget grew by 8 percent. That's a substantial growth in Federal expenditures. My budget slows discretionary spending down to 4 percent. That's more than the rate of inflation. It's a pretty high increase in the expenditures, but it's nothing close to what was happening over the last 3 years, on average, and at the end of last year.

That's caused some consternation because in Washington, the definition of a cut is that you haven't increased the budget as much as anticipated. You may be actually increasing spending, but that's called a cut up here. I've had to learn new accounting. [*Laughter*] But we grow the discretionary spending by 4 percent.

We protect entitlements. All of the payroll taxes will be set aside for Social Security and only Social Security. We double the Medicare budget over a 10-year period of time. We increase Medicare in the first

year, to meet all needs, and including having a prescription drug program for poor seniors to be administered by the States.

It is a budget that meets needs. And by the way, we pay our soldiers more money. We've got an increase in pay for the men and women who wear the uniform. As an aside, I think it's very important for my administration to send this message to Congress and to the country, that we'll first develop a strategic vision of military spending, a strategic vision of the military, and then we'll figure out how to spend the money, as opposed to let's spend the money first and then maybe develop a strategic vision afterwards. It's called planning. And one of the things that executive branch folks must do is to help plan the proper expenditure of money, and that's what we're going to do. But we do increase the military budget, starting with the personnel, to make sure folks are better housed, better paid, and better trained.

And as an aside—a second aside—the Commander in Chief must set a clear mission for all Departments, particularly the Department of Defense. And the mission is to be prepared to fight and win war and, therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place. It's a clear mission and a clear statement of purpose.

There is a lot of discussion about paying down debt. And it's a healthy discussion. We pay down $2 trillion debt over a 10-year period of time in our budget. That's the largest amount of debt ever paid by a country in history. I think that's an accurate statement.

There is also debt at the local level. It's called consumer debt. And so, while a lot of us up here talk about Federal debt, one of my jobs is to make sure the Nation stays focused on the debt that burdens the working folks in America. People have got a lot of credit card debt. And when you couple that with high energy prices, some of the people that you know are in a pinch. And we'd better do something about it. It's important for our economy to do something about that. It's important for the lives of people who struggle to get ahead to do something about it. And that's part of the basis for the tax relief package.

But before I talk about the tax relief, I also want to tell you, we've set aside $1 trillion over 10 years for contingencies. That can mean a lot of things. Contingencies can mean, "Well, maybe the numbers weren't as good," or "I think they're going to be better than they anticipate," by the way. It could be that we need money for emergencies, which we probably will, maybe need a little more money for some of the agricultural sector around the country. There are contingencies set aside.

And finally, that leaves money left over. And the big debate here—and you go through the debate every single budget session—is what to do with it. And I am going to make the case, not only here in Washington but traveling around the country, that we need to remember who paid the bills in the first place.

I'm trying to be as—to bring as much common sense to Washington as I can. And the speech I gave the other night was an attempt to say, here's the priorities; there's money left over. Here's the debt repayment; there's money left over. There's a commonsensical way to budget by setting aside contingencies, and there's still money left over. And by the way, these numbers are based upon conservative assumptions.

The first year, the budget is based upon a 2.4 percent growth. It averages a little more than a 3 percent growth over the next 10 years. We can do better than that in America. America can grow our economy. We're too strong a nation. We're an entrepreneurial nation. We've just got some unbelievable productivity gains to be achieved in our economy.

People take a pessimistic view about how to project revenues, and that's fine. But I just want you to know I'm much more optimistic than the point of view here in Washington. People say, well, what happens if—you know, gosh, what happens—maybe

we need a trigger mechanism, that's kind of the discussion. So, therefore, if the surpluses don't materialize—well, there's two reasons why surpluses won't materialize. One is that the revenues aren't quite as expected because the economy has slowed down, in which case we need to accelerate tax cuts. You see, tax relief will put money in people's pockets, which will help give the economy a second wind. Or, a reason the surplus may not materialize is because Congress has overspent. So it seems like to me we need to be careful about any trigger mechanism that ought to be on spending to make sure that we don't overspend surpluses.

The tax relief package is well thought out and well designed. Of course, I would say that. [*Laughter*] But we've spent a lot of time on it. As opposed to trying to figure out what number sounded like it made sense, we actually calculated the cost of fixing parts of the Tax Code that are unfair.

For example, the death tax is unfair. Many of you come from agricultural States; you know exactly what I'm talking about. The marriage penalty is unfair. The Tax Code itself is unfair, because it's like we erect, as I said in the campaign, a tollbooth right in the middle of the road to the middle class. One on one side, people struggling to get to the tollbooth pay a higher marginal rate on additional dollars earned than people who are successful. If you're a single mom, like I said in my speech, and you're trying to get ahead and you're making in the low $20,000 salary range, as you lose earned-income tax credit, as you start paying the 15 percent bracket, as you pay payroll taxes, your marginal rate is nearly 50 percent on additional dollars earned, and that is not right. And that's not the America that we all want our country to be. It sends the wrong message.

And therefore, we dropped the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent and doubled the child credit, which will make the marginal rates on people starting to get ahead less, and that's important. Access to the middle class is a fundamental part of the American experience.

We also drop all rates. The temptation, of course, as you know, in tax policy is for people to say, "Well, I'll get to decide who gets the tax breaks. Let me make those decisions." It's called targeting. I don't think we ought to try to figure out who is targeted in and targeted out. I think if you pay taxes, you ought to get relief.

Finally, there will be a lot of discussion about whether or not we ought to drop the top rate. Well, first of all, if everybody who pays taxes ought to get relief, then you ought to—need to drop all rates. But secondly, I want to remind you all that when you drop the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent, it enables small businesses and entrepreneurs to more likely be able to expand their businesses. Because if you inquire, you'll find a lot of the small businesses in your districts and in your States are unincorporated small businesses and/or Subchapter S businesses. And the top rate reduction I view as a way to create an environment in which the entrepreneurial spirit can continue to move in America.

One of the most hopeful statistics I heard was in the great State of California, where there are over 700,000 Latino-owned small businesses in that State. That's a fantastic statistic about the American Dream and the American experience and the whole concept of owning something. One of the things that distinguishes our great land is people can own their own business or own their own home. And the idea of encouraging the entrepreneurial experience to flourish, particularly in the small business sector, is what I think good public policy is all about.

So tax relief is not only to—as a way to kick-start the economy that is in fact slowing down, but tax relief is also an opportunity to achieve certain objectives, to make the code more fair, and to make the small-business person more likely to employ additional folks. And that's my case. I think we're going to get it done.

And I'd like your help. I'm going to travel the country a lot, which I'm finding to me is important, not only to make the case, but it's important to remember where I came from. And I came from many of the neighborhoods that you all represent, just good, honorable, hard-working people. I cannot tell you what an honor it is to be the President and to drive in those cars with the American flag flying and to see people lining the roads, waving to the office. It reminds me of the greatness of the country. And it's the people of America. You know that just as well as I do. The people of this great country is what makes this place so special, this land so special. And all public policy must recognize that, and work to empower people, so they can help themselves. My budget does so. That's what the budget is all about. And I want to thank you for giving me a chance to come by and make my case.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:20 a.m. in Presidential Hall in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to California State Senator Jim Costa, president, and New York State Senator Steven M. Saland, president-elect, National Conference of State Legislatures; and Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada.

Remarks at the Swearing-In Ceremony for Anthony J. Principi as Secretary of Veterans Affairs

March 2, 2001

The President. Thank you all for coming. Liz, thank you for being here, and family members who are here, Mom. We are honored you are here, and thank you so much for witnessing the swearing-in of a good man.

Today we honor a man and swear in a man who has served his country in many ways. Tony Principi came to understand the military in wartime as a decorated soldier in Vietnam. As a veteran, he came to understand the Department of Veterans Affairs by serving there. To fill this position, I looked carefully, and I chose well.

America has 25 million veterans. They ask that their Government honor its commitments, as they honored theirs. They ask that their interests be protected, as they protected their country's interests in the line of duty. Secretary Principi is prepared not only to lead this Department but to modernize it. Veterans' claims are often poorly handled, and many veterans are not treated as well as they should be by the health care bureaucracy. Tony and his Department will set new goals for better service. More importantly, we both expect the Department to meet the goals.

As I said to Congress on Tuesday night, we must honor our commitment to veterans by ensuring access to the finest health care. This is a basic obligation of our country. In last year's campaign, I promised American veterans they'd have an advocate in the White House. In Secretary Principi, they now have a strong and faithful friend at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Mr. Secretary, thank you for your service. Congratulations.

[*At this point, Secretary Principi made brief remarks.*]

The President. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:28 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his

remarks, he referred to Secretary Principi's wife, Elizabeth, and his mother, Theresa. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary Principi.

Remarks at the Swearing-In Ceremony for Ann M. Veneman as Secretary of Agriculture
March 2, 2001

Well, it's my honor, along with the Vice President, to welcome Secretary Veneman and her sister, Jane, who did a fine job of holding the Bible, and Veneman family members. Welcome to the Oval Office, and thank you all for coming.

Ann is new to the Cabinet but not to the Department she leads, nor the issues that her Department will face. Having served as California's highest agricultural official and in prominent posts here in Washington, she comes to the job very well prepared.

Agriculture represents 13 percent of our Nation's economy and remains central to prosperity at home and competitiveness abroad. In many ways, it is the most crucial of all industries and, yet, the most easily taken for granted. American farmers are without rival in their ability to produce and compete. But they face every kind of challenge, from bad weather to closed markets.

This administration is going to be a friend to the American farmer. In times of emergency, they will get the assistance they need, when they need it. We will support tax-deferred savings accounts to help farm families guard against downturns. And to keep family farms in the family, we're going to get rid of the death tax.

For many farmers, the greatest challenge today is finding markets for their products. Americans represent just 4 percent of the world's population, but our farmers have the technology and the skill to feed much of the world beyond. Ann and I will carry out this equivocal message to the world: Markets must be open. The United States will not tolerate favoritism and unfair subsidies. We want to compete, and we want our farmers to compete on level ground. And agriculture will no longer be traded away or ignored when we sit down at international negotiating tables. It will be a top priority of ours.

America's farmers will have a strong advocate in the new Secretary. Today, the number of women-owned farms is the highest ever, and Ann Veneman is the first woman ever to hold this position. I'm confident she'll be one of the most successful leaders that this Department has ever had.

Madam Secretary.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:44 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary Veneman.

Remarks at the Swearing-In Ceremony for Spencer Abraham as Secretary of Energy and an Exchange With Reporters
March 2, 2001

The President. It's my honor to welcome the Secretary and his family. I forgot that he and I were members of the fathers of twins club. [*Laughter*] Jane, it's good to see you. I want to welcome you all here. We look forward to having a picture-taking session next door after our brief remarks.

Two months ago, in Austin, I announced my intention to nominate Senator Spence Abraham as the Energy Secretary. He's obviously since then been confirmed by the Senate. His performance in office has already confirmed that I chose the right man for the job.

Secretary Abraham knows energy policy. He understands the many challenges and opportunities before us. Today, we are seeing the consequences of going too long without an energy policy. Many Americans are struggling with the high cost of energy. People who live in the West face a major energy shortage, which has caused rising prices and growing uncertainty.

I have asked Federal agencies to work with California officials to bring more energy to the people of that State, as quickly as possible. Also I've asked Secretary Abraham to work with Vice President Cheney and Secretary of Commerce Evans and other senior officials to develop a comprehensive energy policy for the United States.

Our objective should not only be to manage the current situation but to avoid any crisis in the first instance. This requires a four-part strategy: first, to make energy security a priority of our foreign policy, by restoring American credibility with overseas suppliers and building strong relationships with energy-producing nations in our hemisphere; second, to encourage environmentally friendly exploration and production of domestic energy sources like oil, natural gas, and coal; third, to promote the production of electricity to keep pace with America's growing demands; fourth, to support the development of cost-effective alternative energy sources.

The goals of this strategy are clear: to ensure a steady supply of affordable energy for America's homes and businesses and industries, and to work toward the day when America achieves energy independence.

It was in the State of Michigan that I first pledged a comprehensive energy policy for our country. This afternoon I welcome to the Cabinet a proud son of Michigan, a grandson of immigrants, and a good man.

Mr. Secretary.

[*At this point, Secretary Abraham made brief remarks.*]

Q. Mr. President, do you have time for questions, sir?

The President. No. [*Laughter*]

Camp David

Q. You're going to Camp David a lot. Can you tell us why you like going there, what you do when you're up there?

The President. I guess I do. He's asking—I'm going to Camp David, and I like to spend time with my family. And my brother Marvin and my sister, Dorothy, will join us up there. It's a good place to relax, and it's also a good place to catch up on my work. I'm a little bit behind on my mail right now. But I intend, every chance I get, to go. If I'm not going to Crawford and I don't have to give a speech here on the weekend, I'm going to go to Camp David.

Federal Spending Limits

Q. Mr. President, some members of your own party are chafing at the idea of holding Federal spending increases for——

The President. Yes.

Q. What argument can you make——

The President. Well, I know there's a lot of folks that are used to big spending. After all, the spending increases were very dramatic at the end of the last session. And my answer is, let's—why don't we have some fiscal sanity in Washington. My budget increases the rate of growth in discretionary spending by 4 percent. And surely, Congress will be willing to work with the administration to bring—to control the appetite by 4 percent.

And I believe when people are willing to take a hard look at setting priorities in different spending programs, we'll be able to meet that target and thereby be able to send some of the surplus back to the people, which is an important part about making sure our economy gets a second wind. And it's an important part—and this country has got to remember, the people up here in this—have got to remember that this country—in this country, a lot of folks are paying high energy bills, and a lot of folks have got a lot of debt, personal debt. And if we're wise about how we spend money in Washington, we will enable people to have more money in their own pocket, and that would be wise economic policy.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:02 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary Abraham's wife, Jane. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary Abraham.

Statement on Relief and Reconstruction Assistance for El Salvador
March 2, 2001

I had a good meeting today with El Salvador's President Francisco Flores. I commended him for the strong leadership he and his government have shown in the aftermath of two recent earthquakes that killed and injured thousands of people and left many more homeless.

The United States responded to these earthquakes by quickly sending rescue workers and over $16 million in relief assistance to the people of El Salvador. Today I told President Flores that the United States has pledged $52 million in reconstruction assistance to El Salvador this fiscal year, and I will seek to match or increase that amount for next year.

In addition, I informed him of the Attorney General's decision to grant temporary relief from deportation for a period of 18 months for Salvadoran citizens living in the United States. This will allow them to continue to work here and to remit some of their wages back home to support El Salvador's recovery efforts.

The recent earthquake in Washington State brings home to the citizens of our Nation how natural disaster can strike any of us. And it reminds us of our obligation to reach out to help those in other nations struggling in the wake of disaster to rebuild their homes and lives.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on International Agreements
March 2, 2001

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

Pursuant to subsection (b) of the Case-Zablocki Act, (1 U.S.C. 112b), I hereby transmit a report prepared by the Department of State concerning international agreements.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Continued Deployment of United States Forces to East Timor
March 2, 2001

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

On August 25, 2000, President Clinton provided a report to the Congress regarding the continued deployment of U.S. Armed Forces in support of East Timor's transition to independence. I am providing this supplemental report, consistent with the War Powers Resolution, to help ensure that the Congress is kept fully informed regarding U.S. Armed Forces in East Timor.

As you are aware, U.N. Security Council Resolution 1272 established the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) on October 25, 1999. The UNTAET's mandate includes providing security and maintaining law and order throughout East Timor, establishing an effective administration, ensuring the coordination and delivery of humanitarian assistance, and supporting capacity-building for self-government. The United States currently contributes three military observers to UNTAET. These personnel are assigned to the United Nations pursuant to the United Nations Participation Act (Public Law 79–264), and operate under U.N. operational control.

The United States also maintains a military presence in East Timor that is separate from UNTAET. This includes the U.S. Support Group East Timor (USGET), comprised of approximately 12 U.S. personnel, including a security detachment, which facilitates and coordinates U.S. military activities in East Timor, and a rotational presence of U.S. forces through temporary deployments to East Timor. These rotational presence operations include monthly Navy ship visits and deployments of military medical and engineering teams that conduct humanitarian and civic assistance activities in areas critical to East Timor's citizens. United States forces assigned to USGET and those conducting rotational presence operations operate under U.S. command and control and U.S. rules of engagement. The United Nations has indicated that East Timor has benefited greatly from U.S. military deployments and engagement activities in East Timor and strongly supports the continued U.S. presence there.

At this point, our rotational presence operations are envisioned to continue through December 2001. The duration of our support depends upon the course of events in East Timor. It is, however, our objective

to reduce the rotational presence operations, as well as to redeploy USGET, as soon as circumstances permit.

I have authorized the continuation of this action pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution. I appreciate the support of the Congress in this action.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate.

The President's Radio Address
March 3, 2001

Good morning. As I begin, I want to say a few words about the people of Washington State. Earlier this week, that State was rocked by a powerful earthquake which affected countless lives and caused billion dollars of damage. The Director of the Federal Emergency Management Association, Joe Allbaugh, went immediately to Seattle, and my administration is providing help. Our prayers are with the people of Washington State.

A few days ago, I had the honor of addressing a joint session of Congress. I hope you had a chance to tune in and hear my plans for the Federal budget and my priorities for the country. After making my case to Congress, I headed out early the next morning on a swing through five States to bring my case directly to you, the American people.

I approach our budget as American families do. First, we set priorities and funded them. My top priority is education reform, and I have asked that the Department of Education receive the largest percentage increase of any Federal agency. We increase funding for our reading programs and character education and recruiting good teachers. This time around, however, we won't be just spending more money; we will be setting higher standards and expecting real results for all our children.

We're going to keep the promise of Social Security and keep the Government from raiding the Social Security surplus. And to safeguard the system against long-term threats, I will form a Presidential commission to reform Social Security and place it on firm financial ground. We will spend more on Medicare as well, nearly doubling its budget in 10 years. But just as important, we will modernize Medicare to provide a prescription drug benefit for senior citizens. We will also support and strengthen America's military, starting with a pay increase and better housing for our troops.

After meeting these national priorities, my budget pays down a record amount of national debt. We will pay off $2 trillion of debt over the next decade. That will be the largest debt reduction of any country, ever. Future generations shouldn't be forced to pay back money that we have borrowed. We owe this kind of responsibility to our children and grandchildren.

And in addition to funding our priorities and reducing debt by a record amount, we set up a contingency fund of nearly $1 trillion, and we still have money left over. The surplus money that remains will be used for a broad, fair tax relief. A surplus,

after all, is an overcharge of American taxpayers. And on your behalf, I am asking for a refund.

My tax plan reduces income tax rates across the board, giving the largest percentage reductions to working families who need the most help. My plan reduces the marriage penalty and gets rid of the death tax. It will boost the economy and help create new businesses, new jobs, and new growth at a time when we need all three.

When the tax cut takes effect, the typical family of four will save $1,600 every year. Some say that's not much. But they ought to talk to people like Steven and Josefina Aramos, young parents trying to build a better life for their family. Right now they pay about $8,000 a year in Federal income taxes. My plan will save this hard-working family more than $2,000. Steven says, and I quote, "Two thousand dollars is a lot to my family. If we had this money, it would help us reach our goal of paying off our personal debt in 2 years time."

Well, I want the Aramos family and millions of others like them to meet their goals and to live out their best hopes for themselves and their children. Our Federal budget must be good for the family budget.

That was my message to Congress on Tuesday. And now I hope you'll send a message in favor of tax relief to your Congressman or your Senator. After all, the surplus is your money.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 1:05 p.m. on March 2 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on March 3. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 2 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Statement on the National Guard Aircraft Tragedy in Georgia
March 3, 2001

I was deeply saddened to learn of the loss of 21 members of the Florida and Virginia National Guard aboard a C–23 transport plane that crashed this morning outside Macon, Georgia. This tragic loss on a routine training mission reminds us of the sacrifices made each and every day by all of our men and women in uniform. The price of freedom is never free. Today's events remind us that it is sometimes unspeakably high. On behalf of the entire Bush family, I extend our deepest condolences to the families of the victims and to all members of the 171st Aviation Battalion of the Florida Army National Guard and the 203d Red Horse Flight of the Virginia Air National Guard. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all during this very difficult time.

Remarks on Arrival in Hampton, Virginia
March 4, 2001

Well, thank you all very much. And thank you for your service to this great land of ours. Laura and I are thrilled to be here. I'm traveling today with members of my Cabinet: the Secretary of State, Colin Powell, and Alma—she is the true general in that family—[*laughter*]—the Secretary of Defense, Secretary Rumsfeld, and his

bride; the Secretary of Energy, Secretary Abraham, and his bride.

We've assembled the finest national security team of any administration. We understand our job is to keep the peace. But we also understand in order to do so, our military must be well prepared, well trained, well housed, and well paid.

One of the first policy speeches I gave was to send the message, loud and clear, to the U.S. Congress that we expect there to be a pay raise for those who wear the uniform. But what you can expect from us is a clear mission, a clear, focused mission that says our military will be trained and ready to fight and win war and, therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place.

We're honored to be here. Thank you for your service to America. Our country and the world is better off for it.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 1 p.m. at Langley Air Force Base. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary Powell's wife, Alma; Secretary Rumsfeld's wife, Joyce; and Secretary Abraham's wife, Jane. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at the Christening Ceremony for the U.S.S. *Ronald Reagan* in Newport News, Virginia

March 4, 2001

Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary. Mr. Secretary, thank you for those kind words. I picked the right man to be the Secretary of Defense at this time in history.

Mrs. Reagan, it is an honor to be with you. Reagan family members, friends of the great President, Laura and I are honored to be here.

We join with the Governor and Senator of this State in asking for God's blessings on those who lost their lives yesterday and for their families.

Bill, thank you very much for your hospitality. Secretary Powell and Secretary Abraham, Leader Lott, Chairman Warner—I can't tell if you're trying to retire me early—[*laughter*]—or influence my behavior.

Senator Allen, Governor Gilmore, Representative Scott, and Members of Congress, Justice Kennedy, Admiral Clark, welcome. But most of all, I want to welcome the men and women of the United States Navy, including the officers and crew who will soon be on the *Ronald Reagan*.

Looking at the bow of this great ship, we think of those who will sail it and of those who built it. Into this ship, 6 years in the making, we have put the finest of American workmanship. On board this ship, we'll put the finest sailors in the world. And upon this ship, we have put the finest of American names.

Forty-nine years ago, another outstanding American took that name herself. Mrs. Reagan, I know today is your 49th anniversary, wedding anniversary. Since your wedding day, you've seen the name "Reagan" written large in many places, from theater marquees to the archways of great buildings. But there is something especially fitting in the place it holds today, on the newest ship in the greatest navy in the world. When we send her off to sea, it is certain that the *Ronald Reagan* will meet with rough waters as well as smooth, and headwinds as well as fair. But she will sail tall and strong, like the man we have known.

A man cannot be strong forever, but if he is very fortunate, life will send him a

partner to be strong when he is not. In a life of honors, Ronald Reagan has always valued one honor above all, the love of Nancy. It is a love that believes all, hopes all, and endures all. Mrs. Reagan, anyone who has seen you together knows how much you mean to him. I want you to know how much your care and love for him means to America.

It was said of a great architect centuries ago, "If you want to seek his monument, look around you." That is true of Ronald Reagan. We live in a world shaped in so many ways by his will and heart. As President, Ronald Reagan believed without question that tyranny is temporary and the hope of freedom is universal and permanent; that our Nation has a unique goodness and must remain uniquely strong; that God takes the side of justice, because all our rights are His own gifts. The strength of these beliefs gave strength to our allies and hope to political prisoners and courage to average citizens in oppressed nations and leadership to our military and to our country.

Some achievements fade with the years. Ronald Reagan's achievements grow larger with the passing of time. He had a profound vision of America's role in the world as one of peace through strength. And because of Ronald Reagan, the world saw America as a strong and peaceful nation.

Today's world is different from the one he faced and changed. We are no longer divided into armed camps, locked in a careful balance of terror. Yet, freedom still has enemies. Our present dangers are less concentrated and more varied. They come from rogue nations, from terrorism, from missiles that threaten our forces, our friends, our allies, and our homeland. Our times call for new thinking. But the values Ronald Reagan brought to America's conduct in the world will not change.

So as we dedicate this ship, I want to rededicate American policy to Ronald Reagan's vision of optimism, modesty, and resolve. Ronald Reagan's optimism defined his character, and it defined his Presidency. More than a habit of mind, this optimism sprang from deep confidence in the power and future of American ideals. Great democracies, he believed, are built on the strong foundation of consent and human dignity; any government built on oppression is built on sand. The future, he proclaimed, belongs to the free.

That belief has lost none of its power to inspire hope and change. Around the world today, the expectation of freedom is fed by free markets and expanded by free trade and carried across borders by the Internet. And nations that try to restrict these freedoms are in a losing battle with liberty.

America, by nature, stands for freedom. And we must always remember, we benefit when it expands. So we will stand by those nations moving towards freedom. We'll stand up to those nations who deny freedom and threaten our neighbors or our vital interests, and we will assert emphatically that the future will belong to the free.

At the same time, President Reagan understood that this confidence should never be arrogance. No one was better at using the bully pulpit of the Presidency, but under his leadership America was never a bully.

One of the ways we show the world we take our values seriously is to live by them ourselves. Our Nation cherishes freedom, but we do not own it. While it is the birthright of every American, it is also the equal promise of the religious believer in southern Sudan or an Iraqi farmer in the Tigress Valley or of a child born in China today. We help fulfill that promise not by lecturing the world but by leading it.

Precisely because America is powerful, we must be sensitive about expressing our power and influence. Our goal is to patiently build the momentum of freedom, not create resentment for America itself. We pursue our goals; we will listen to others. We want strong friends to join us, not weak neighbors to dominate. In all our

dealings with other nations, we will display the modesty of true confidence and strength.

Finally, Ronald Reagan understood that the advance of freedom depends on American strength. We must have a military that is second to none and that includes a Navy that is second to none.

As has been mentioned, for the last 60 years, every President has had to ask, "Where are the carriers?" None has ever been disappointed by the Navy's response. Just a few weeks ago, I asked the same question and called upon the *Harry S. Truman* in the Persian Gulf. Ronald Reagan built the military of today, the military that keeps our peace, but we cannot live forever on that legacy. Our challenge is to build a military that will deter and win the wars of the future.

Almost 20 years ago, President Reagan made his first visit to an aircraft carrier, the U.S.S. *Constellation.* He told the sailors how grateful America was that they were there as a powerful force in an uncertain world. One hundred thousand tons of American power, you see over here, will carry forward this proud tradition. In fact, in 2 years, the *Reagan* will actually replace U.S.S. *Constellation.*

What you don't see is what's different between those two magnificent vessels. The island on the *Reagan*'s main deck is almost the same height as that of its predecessors, but it has one less level. The empty space will be filled with cables that will tie the ship into a vast network that connects information and weapons in new ways. This will revolutionize the Navy's ability to project American power over land and sea, assuring access for all our forces wherever our vital interests are threatened.

These new capabilities are the future of our military, not just the Navy but of all our services. It is a future where a revolution in technology will change the face of war itself. We'll keep the peace by redefining the terms of war. We'll change our military, yet we will never forget that America's strength ultimately depends on the courage and spirit of the men and women who wear the uniform.

Nearly half our ships are at sea right now. One-third are forward-deployed overseas, taking their crew away from family and the comforts of home. In our sleep, we don't think about the enemies that the men and women who wear the uniform deter, the friends they reassure, the freedom in trade they guarantee. Yet, we rest at night protected by the security they provide.

As President, Ronald Reagan understood our duty to these brave Americans, and so do I. Our men and women in uniform give America their best, and we owe them our support in return. These are the defining qualities of Ronald Reagan: optimism, modesty, and strength. They're also the qualities that will guide America in a new century.

So, today the *Ronald Reagan* begins its journey into the bright and peaceful dawn that President Reagan helped to bring. All of us here wish the ship *Ronald Reagan* Godspeed, and we wish Ronald Reagan God's blessings.

God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:52 p.m. at Newport News Shipbuilding. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. James S. Gilmore III of Virginia; William P. Fricks, chairman and chief executive officer, Newport News Shipbuilding; and Admiral Vernon E. Clark, USN, Chief of Naval Operations.

Statement on the Death of James Rhodes
March 4, 2001

America and Ohio lost a great man today, Governor Jim Rhodes. Laura and I share in this time of mourning with the people of Ohio. Jim was a dedicated, honorable public servant. His distinguished career included representing Ohio and its people longer than any other Governor in the State's history. Our thoughts and prayers are with his daughters, Suzanne and Sharon, and his entire family.

Remarks at the Swearing-In Ceremony for Joe M. Allbaugh as Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency
March 5, 2001

Thank you all very much. It's an honor to be here to swear in my friend.

I first want to say it's a treat to see Mr. and Mrs. Allbaugh, from the great State of Oklahoma; and his brother; most importantly, Diane and Taylor. Thank you all for being here. Of course, you wouldn't have missed it. [*Laughter*]

When I was a Governor, Joe and I used to travel a lot together, and a lot of times people would come up and say, "Is he your bodyguard?" [*Laughter*] He wasn't, but I always felt a little safer when he was around. And that's the kind of man he is, and that's the kind of man I wanted to run FEMA.

When the worst happens anywhere in America, I can assure you folks will be confident when Joe Allbaugh arrives on the scene. He's not just a commanding presence or his stylish haircut—[*laughter*]—it's his confidence, his character, and his calm when trouble comes.

This isn't mere speculation. Last Wednesday at 10:54 in the morning, an earthquake rocked the State of Washington, injuring hundreds of people and causing billion dollars of property damage. By 11:30 that night, Joe Allbaugh was on the scene ready to assist people in need. That's the kind of man he is.

I couldn't have made it to Washington without him. And I can't tell you how honored I am that he has come to Washington to serve his country.

We never know where FEMA will be needed next, but we do know what makes this Agency so effective: more than 2,000 dedicated employees all across America; 4,000 standby employees, ready if needed; an ethic of professionalism; and a willingness to work with State and local officials to help people in need.

As Governor, I worked with FEMA officials. Joe and I have great respect for the outgoing Director, James Lee Witt, and for the Acting Director, John Magaw. A lot of change is needed in Washington, but in this Agency the standards are already high. Every year, many thousands of Americans live through floods and hurricanes and fires. They know from personal experience that FEMA is an example of the Federal Government at its best. And I'll tell you from personal experience that FEMA has a new Director that speaks to America at its best.

When he acts, he'll have my full confidence. When he speaks, it will inspire confidence in others. This Agency is in strong and steady hands. Joe will be at the White House many times in the next few years. In the nature of his job, they won't

always be the happiest of times. But Joe will help Americans deal with the worst in the best, most compassionate way possible.

Thank you for accepting this responsibility.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:15 a.m. in the Columbia Room at the Holiday Inn Capitol At The Smithsonian. In his remarks, he referred to Director Allbaugh's parents, Marvin and Peggy; his brother, Jay; and his wife, Diane, and daughter, Taylor. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Director Allbaugh.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters
March 5, 2001

Santana High School Shootings

The President. Before I talk about the business at hand here, I want to say how saddened we all are to know that two students lost their lives in southern California, others have been injured, in a disgraceful act of cowardice. When America teaches their children right from wrong and teaches values to respect life—and the values that respect life in our country, our country will be better off.

Our hearts go out and our prayers go out to the parents and the teachers and the children whose lives have been completely turned upside down right now.

Q. What can the President do to stop, if anything, to stop children from shooting children?

The President. All of us, all adults in society can teach children right from wrong, can explain there is a—that life is precious. All of us must be mindful of the fact that some people may decide to act out their aggressions or their pain and hurt on somebody else, and be diligent.

We don't know enough of the facts right now, Ron [Ron Fournier, Associated Press], as to what took place. But I do know that first things are first, and that is, our prayers go with the families who lost a child today.

Legislative Agenda

On another matter, I'm honored that Members of the House and the Senate came up to discuss a couple of issues: the budget, Medicare, Medicare funding, Medicare restructuring, and tax relief. We've had a good discussion.

I didn't mention many names of Members during my speech to the Congress nearly a week ago, but most of the names I mentioned are here. And the reason why I talked about Breaux, Frist, and Thomas—and I would have worked in you, Mr. Chairman, but—was because there had been a lot of work done on discussing Medicare modernization in the past. And I believe the framework for a bipartisan consensus about how to make sure the Medicare system fulfills its promise is at hand, and we've got a lot of work to do. But I assured these Members—two chairmen, as well as the Members I just named—that this administration is here to work with them to do what's right for our seniors.

I also appreciate the progress being made on the tax relief package. It will give me a chance to thank the chairman for moving the bill to the floor of the House. The sooner we can get that done, the more likely it is that we'll provide relief for people and provide a second wind for our

economy, and then we'll be able to deal with issues such as Medicare.

Tax Relief Legislation

Q. Mr. President, is your tax bill in trouble? Is that why you're traveling so much this week? Some Democrats think that might be the case.

The President. Oh, I'm—first of all, I like to get out of Washington, Bill [Bill Plante, CBS News]. [*Laughter*] Secondly, I'm pleased with the progress that we're making. We're going to get a good bill out of both the House and the Senate. I look forward to signing it, and the sooner, the better. But we're making very good progress.

Secondly, I think it's important for the President to get out amongst the people. I'm not only going to be going to North Dakota and South Dakota and Illinois this week, I'm coming down to Louisiana. And I've got a lot of friends in Louisiana, and I'm looking forward to seeing them and talking to them and explaining what's going on in Washington. The American people want to hear from the President, and this will give me a chance to talk about the progress that we're all making together. And we're making good progress.

Q. Mr. President?

The President. Yes, Stretch [David Gregory, NBC News]?

President's Visits to North Dakota and Louisiana

Q. Kent Conrad is one of the opponents of the tax cut plan. You're going to his State; you're also going to Louisiana, where Mary Landrieu—everyone knows is going to be under pressure to support the bill. Is it a coincidence that you're going to be going there, or is this trip part of the intention to send them a message?

The President. I think there's some methodology in my travels. Not only—you mentioned two fine Senators, and I'm confident we'll be able to work with them as time goes on. Those also happen to be States where the majority of the folks there saw it my way when I was running for President.

I'll be going to States where we've got a good chance of convincing Members in States where maybe there's some obstinance. But nevertheless, I need to get out, and with the people, and talk about the plans and why this plan is fair and why it makes sense and why it's important for the economic vitality of the country. We're making good progress. We'll get a good bill, and I look forward to signing it.

Russia-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, are you going to apologize to the Russians for digging under their Embassy?

The President. You need to talk to the appropriate folks involved with that.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:45 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Honoring the NCAA Football Champion and Women's Softball Champion University of Oklahoma Sooners
March 5, 2001

The President. Sit down. [*Laughter*] It's an honor to be here. This is the first championship teams that I've had a chance to honor since I've been the President. And it's a big deal for a boy from Texas to welcome the folks from Oklahoma here.

[*Laughter*] I was going to say "my fellow Texans."

I am so proud of you all. Thank you for coming. Senator, thank you for being here. Congressman, I appreciate you being here. President Boren, you had quite a year—you had quite a year.

First, let me say to the unsinkable bunch of upstarts, the ladies softball team: Congratulations. Coach Patricia Gasso has done a fabulous job, and I'm honored that you all have come. I am fully aware of the dominance of California teams in ladies softball, and you proved that those of us who live in the middle part of the country can win, as well.

And to the football team: Congratulations, coach. I know you're proud of these people. We share a lot in common. We both started our respective campaigns as underdogs. [*Laughter*] We both won our championships in the State of Florida. [*Laughter*] There's a big difference though: It took you all 60 minutes; it took me 36 days. [*Laughter*]

But it's my honor to welcome you all here. I like to remind those who are champions on the field that it's important to be a champion off the field, too; that there's a lot of young men and women who look at you all as champs and that adds an added burden, an added sense of responsibility; that if part of our role as role models is to set the—is to explain the difference between right and wrong to people looking at us, then we've got to live that way. Being the champ, the national champ, is an awesome responsibility. It means not only do you get to carry a trophy, it means you have the burden of setting the example, of saying to young kids, "Somebody cares about you enough so that we'll help you make the right choices in life," so they get to be a champion, not only on the football fields or on the softball diamonds but in life—in life.

And so, I am so honored you're here. I really appreciate you coming. I'm proud of your victory. It's a big deal to be the national champs. But it's also going to be a big deal to set the right example for some young lady or some young man who wonders whether or not life's worth it all, as you've proven it is. You've proven that if you set a goal and work hard, you can achieve it.

And so, congratulations to the great University of Oklahoma teams. I'm proud to welcome you. I'm proud you're here in the people's house. It is an honor to be your President, more than you can possibly imagine, and it's an honor to welcome you here.

God bless.

[*At this point, University of Oklahoma president David L. Boren, head softball coach Patty Gasso, director of athletics Joe Castiglione, and head football coach Bob Stoops each made brief remarks and presented the President with gifts.*]

The President. Well, thank you all for coming. I look forward to shaking everybody's hand. And I guess it's time to get a few pictures.

But again, I want to welcome you all here. This is a majestic place, as you can see. It is a magnificent home, and it's the people's house. That's what we like to call it. We're just temporary residents. But it's an honor to have you all here. I hope you get a good tour and realize this country is a fantastic place. It's based upon the greatest principle of all: We're all free, and we're all equal under the eyes of God.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:45 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Exchange With Reporters Following a Meeting With Mayor Richard M. Daley in Chicago, Illinois
March 6, 2001

President's Visit to Chicago

Q. Why don't you tell us what's on the conversation table?

Mayor Daley. [*Inaudible*]—a wonderful book on Chicago, the great past, present, and future of this city. So I'm very honored and pleased to be here at luncheon with the President.

The President. I just got a lesson in Chicago politics. [*Laughter*]

Q. What is that lesson, Mr. President?

The President. [*Inaudible*]—for the second time in 6 months. [*Laughter*]

Mayor Daley. I told him we both have great brothers. [*Laughter*]

The President. That if you run for President, make sure you get the mayor on your side. [*Laughter*]

I respect Mayor Daley. I don't know if you remember, but every time I came to Illinois I always made a point of saying that I wish the mayor were on my side, because he'll make a huge difference for people he backs. More importantly, he's made a huge difference for the people of this city. He's one of the Nation's really good mayors.

We had a long-ranging discussion, and I came just to introduce myself so he got to know me. And he now knows he can pick up the phone and call the White House anytime he needs to.

Q. Can you give us a bit of insight into what you all talked about?

The President. We talked about just about everything. We talked politics, of course, and we talked about issues that face Chicago. He gave me a lot of good advice—want to pay attention to the big-city mayors. And I told him we've got a lot in common. We're both problem solvers, the kind of people that when we identify a problem, we try to work hard to solve it. And that's what the mayor's reputation has been. I also thanked him for the good work he's done on education reform here in Chicago.

Tax Relief Legislation

Q. How about selling him on the budget and tax cuts?

The President. We didn't spend a lot of time on the budget. I'm going to spend a little more time downstairs on the budget. The mayor gave me some interesting advice on tax relief that—as you know, he made—well, he can speak for himself, but he talked about the earned-income tax credit and the need for the good citizens of this city who are eligible for the EITC to go out and find it.

Vice President Dick Cheney

Q. How's the Vice President?

The President. I haven't talked to him. I talked to him late yesterday afternoon. He sounded great. He told me he'd be back to work soon.

Q. Should he cut back on workload?

The President. No, he shouldn't.

Q. Why not? Is the job——

The President. Well, because he's needed. This country needs his wisdom and judgment. And he's the kind of man who listens carefully to his body, and he is not going to put himself in a position where he gets very sick. Anytime there's any doubt as to whether or not he needs to see a doctor, he'll see a doctor. And he's plenty strong and plenty capable of carrying the workload that he's been working in the past.

Keep in mind, I'm not his doctor. It's going to be up to his doctor and his wife and his family to make the decision. But I don't think he needs to cut back on his work.

Q. What advice did you offer—[*inaudible*]?

Q. [*Inaudible*]—job of Vice President, with all it currently entails, too stressful for him?

The President. Not at all.

Ann [Ann Compton, ABC News], good to see you.

NOTE: The exchange began at 1:45 p.m. in the Executive Conference Room at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange in Chicago
March 6, 2001

Well, thank you all. Thank you very much. Scott, thank you very much. I thought I had seen just about everything in life, until I came here. [*Laughter*] It is an honor to be in entrepreneurial heaven. What an exciting place. Thanks for having me. I appreciate the hospitality, and I appreciate you giving me a chance to come and talk a little tax policy with you.

I've had quite a day here in Chicago. I got a Chicago political lesson for lunch. [*Laughter*] I dined with the mayor. It's the second political lesson I've had in recent weeks. [*Laughter*] The first lesson I got was in early November—[*laughter*]—if you know what I mean. [*Laughter*] I told the people of Illinois every time I came here, I said, "I wish the mayor were on my side, because he's good." But more importantly, he's a really good mayor. He's a good mayor of a big city. We've had our time for politics; now it's time to do what's right for our country and for the cities.

The mayor and I share something in common. We're both problem solvers. We try to have a clear-eyed view and a commonsense approach to solving problems. And so we're going to have a good relationship. And I'm so honored the mayor was gracious in dining with me.

I'm also honored to be here with the Speaker of the House—just happens to be from the State of Illinois. I like to describe the Speaker as a trustworthy man. He's the kind of fellow who says when he gives you his word, he means it. Sometimes that doesn't happen all the time in the political process. Sometimes they'll look you in the eye and not mean it. [*Laughter*] The Speaker means it when he tells you something. I look forward to working with you, Mr. Speaker.

I'm honored to be traveling with your United States Senator Fitzgerald. We flew down on Air Force One today. He's a good young leader. Congressman Lipinski is with us. We're going to fly back from here to Washington. He and I will have a little quality time together. [*Laughter*] I'm looking forward to it, because he's a quality person. I appreciate the Lieutenant Governor coming, as well, and thank you very much for your hospitality.

There's a lot of people here reminding me that they're from Texas, and I appreciate my fellow Texans who are here; a lot of Chicago folks thanking me for the Sammy Sosa trade. [*Laughter*]

I'm reminded about the truth when I come to a place like this: The entrepreneurial spirit is what America is all about. That's what this country is about.

The job of Government is not to try to create wealth. That's not the role of our Government. The role of Government is to create an environment in which the entrepreneur can realize his or her dreams, in which the small-business person can start

a company and make it grow. So my job is not only to deal with problems; my job is to understand the philosophy that has made the country great and never forget it—never forget it—and that is that we're going to have dreamers in America.

We're facing a problem, and the problem is, our economy's slowing down. You all know that as well as anybody does. This kind of great boom is beginning to sputter a little bit. And the question you need to be asking the President is, "What do you intend to do about it, Mr. President?"

And here it is: One, have sound budgeting in the Federal Government. It's to say to the spenders in Washington, DC, "Here are the priorities for our country." A priority is educating children. And let me—as an aside, as I continue to praise the mayor—he has done a good job of setting high standards, strong accountability in the schools of Chicago. So a priority of mine is public education. I believe every child—every child—ought to be educated and not one child left behind.

A priority is to make sure we keep the peace by having a strong military. We need to pay the men and women who wear the uniform more money, to keep morale high. A priority is Social Security, to make sure the moms and dads of the World War II generation get the promises made. But it's also to be bold enough to reform the system, to let younger workers take some of your own payroll taxes and manage it for your own account. That's a priority of mine. Medicare and health care is a priority. And we double the Medicare budget over 10 years. We pay down $2 trillion of debt.

But guess what? There's still money left over. If you don't spend like they spent the last couple of years, if you're wise and set priorities, there's still money. And the fundamental question is, do we grow the Government, or do we trust people with their own money? That's the fundamental question facing the United States Congress.

I had the honor of speaking to the Congress. I reminded them that when the Government has a surplus, somebody is getting overcharged. And I'm here asking for a refund, I said. I want to reduce those taxes.

I think it is particularly appropriate to not only cut taxes to make sure there's fiscal discipline in Washington, but it's necessary to make sure this economy doesn't continue to sputter. When you give people some of their own money back, or don't take it in the first place, they will have money in their pockets to spend.

There's some debt, all right, at the national level, and there's plenty of debt on the consumers of America. I bet you've got friends, and maybe yourself, understand what it means to have credit card debt. And when you couple that with high energy bills, there are some people beginning to feel pinched. It makes sense to take some of your money and pass it back to the people who pay the bills.

And that's exactly what my tax relief plan does. It drops all rates. It dropped all rates on all payers. Sometimes in Washington, you hear the talk, we'll have targeted tax cuts. That means the elected officials get to decide who's targeted in and who's targeted out. That's not fair, and that's not the right way to do it. If you're going to have tax relief, everybody who pays taxes ought to get tax relief.

So we drop all the rates and simplify the code. We drop the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent and increase the child credit from $500 to $1,000 to make the code more fair. The Tax Code's unfair for people at the bottom end of the economic ladder. The harder you struggle, the more—higher marginal rate you pay in America, and that's not right. So we make the code more fair.

But we also drop that top rate, from 39.6 to 33 percent. And we do so for this reason: Much of the capital that accumulates in the private sector ends up being managed by small-business owners. Small business is the backbone of the country. Many of you all are small-business owners.

Ninety-five percent of small-business owners pay the highest marginal rate in our Tax Code. They're unincorporated businesses. They're what we call sole proprietors.

When we cut that top rate from 39.6 percent to 33 percent, we're saying a loud and clear message that the entrepreneurial spirit will be reinvigorated as we head into the 21st century. It's a way to pass capital formation in the small-business sector in America. And it's the right thing to do.

It's the right thing to set priorities. It's the right thing to pay down $2 trillion of debt over 10 years, and it is the right thing not to grow the Federal Government bigger than it needs to be, and trust people with your own money. I like to tell people in Washington, the surplus isn't the Government's money; the surplus is the people's money, and we need to share it with the people.

I like to move around the country. I like to get out of Washington, because you see a lot of interesting things and you hear a lot of wisdom from people who are just average, everyday people. And I want to tell you what a grandmother told the other day, in Council Bluffs, Iowa. She said, "I have a lot of children and grandchildren go through my house." She said, "And I know if there are cookies left on the table, they will be eaten." She said that in the context of your taxpayers—of tax dollars. That's what she was talking about. And her point is this: If we leave the money up in Washington and don't send it back to the people, it's, sure enough, going to be spent.

Now is the time—now is the time for meaningful, real tax relief. And as we're changing the Tax Code, by the way, we need to eliminate the death tax, too. We need to allow it so that you don't get taxed twice for your assets. And we need to do something about the marriage penalty. It doesn't make sense to tax marriage. And so I'm here to ask for your help.

See, I believe in the power of the people. I truly do. I do. I believe that when you e-mail a Congressman or a Senator, it makes a difference. It makes a difference. And so that's why I'm traveling the country, and that's why I came here. I'd like for you to contact your Congressman and contact your Senator and tell them to come on the side of the people, when it comes to what to do with your money. We have a fundamental choice, and the right choice is to stand on the side of the people.

And let me conclude by telling you, the tax policy's important, and there will be a lot of tax policy. And of course, good health policy's important, and keeping the peace is important. But there's nothing more important than remembering that the most important job you'll ever have, if you happen to be a mom or a dad, is to love your children with all your heart and all your soul. I was reminded of that when I walked through and saw the pictures that many of the entrepreneurs here in the Merc had of their children. It's such a refreshing sight, to know that priorities are kept all across America.

This is a fabulous nation we live in. It's a nation based upon great values. It's a nation based upon the principle that if you work hard, anybody, regardless of where you're from, can get ahead. But it's going to be made better when all of us understand that there are certain responsibilities in life. I have a responsibility as your President. And when I put my hand on the Bible, I swore to uphold that responsibility, and I will. And you have the responsibility to love a neighbor like you'd like to be loved yourself. But it all starts with loving your children.

Thank you for letting me come by. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:27 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Scott Gordon, chairman, Chicago Mercantile Exchange; Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago, IL; and Lt. Gov. Corinne Wood of Illinois.

Message on the Observance of Eid al-Adha
March 6, 2001

Warm greetings to Muslims across the United States as you celebrate the Eid al-Adha holiday and join in spirit with the millions gathered in Mecca to uphold the traditions of one of your most sacred feasts.

America was built on a strong spiritual foundation, and the celebration of faith is central to our lives. As you celebrate the annual Hajj, the fifth pillar of Islam, you honor the great sacrifice and devotion of Abraham as recognized by Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. By educating others about your religious traditions, you enrich the lives of others in your local communities.

The variety of nations and cultures represented by those who travel to Mecca each year, and the varied ways in which Muslims contribute to American life across the United States, are powerful reminders that ethnic and racial differences need not divide us when we share common values and purposes. By building strong foundations of mutual respect, we can achieve peace and reconciliation in our world.

Laura joins me in sending best wishes for a joyous holiday celebration.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus
March 6, 2001

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

In accordance with Public Law 95–384 (22 U.S.C. 2373(c)), I submit to you this report on progress toward a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus question covering the period December 1, 2000–January 31, 2001. The previous submission covered events during October and November 2000.

The United Nations continued in its efforts to sustain the proximity talks that started in December 1999. The United States remains committed to the United Nations effort to find a just and lasting settlement to the Cyprus problem.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Telecommunications Payments to Cuba
March 6, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 1705(e)(6) of the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, as amended by section 102(g) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996, Public Law 104–114, 110 Stat. 785, 22 U.S.C. 6004(e)(6), I transmit herewith a semiannual report detailing payments made to Cuba by United States persons as a result of the provision of telecommunications services pursuant to

Department of the Treasury specific licenses.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
March 6, 2001.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Trade Policy Agenda and a Report on the Trade Agreements Program
March 6, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 163 of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (19 U.S.C. 2213), I transmit herewith the 2001 Trade Policy Agenda and 2000 Annual Report on the Trade Agreements Program.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
March 6, 2001.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea and an Exchange With Reporters
March 7, 2001

President Bush. Everybody in? It's been my honor to welcome President Kim here to the Oval Office. We had a very good discussion. We confirmed the close relationship between our two countries. We talked about a lot of subjects, and we'll be glad to answer questions on some of those subjects. But first let me say how much I appreciate this man's leadership in terms of reaching out to the North Koreans.

He is leading; he is a leader. He is—and we've had a very frank discussion about his vision for peace on the Peninsula. It's a goal we share. After all, we've got vested interests there, and we had a very good discussion. I made it clear to the President, we look forward to working toward peace on the Peninsula, that we'll consult closely, that we'll stay in touch, that I do have some skepticism about the leader of North Korea, but that's not going to preclude us from trying to achieve the common objectives.

So, Mr. President, welcome. Thank you for being here.

President Kim. First of all, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to President Bush for inviting me to visit Washington and have this meeting with him, despite his very busy schedule, I'm sure, in these early weeks after inauguration.

I'm delighted to have had this opportunity to start building friendship and close cooperative working relationship with President Bush on a variety of issues. I thank the President for sharing his insight and wisdom with me concerning the situation in northeast Asia and the world, in general. And while discussing things with him, I could feel that I was sitting next to a leader who would take the world to greater peace and prosperity in the 21st century.

President Bush and I covered the whole variety of issues in ROK–U.S. relations. It has been a most useful exchange of views. We have agreed to work together towards the further strengthening of the ROK–U.S.

alliance, and our close policy coordination in dealing with North Korea towards the goal of ending the cold war and strengthening peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula.

And taking this opportunity, I would like to invite you, Mr. President, to come and visit us in Seoul as early as you can, so that we will have another opportunity to further strengthen the close cooperative working relationship between our two allies.

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

I'm going to take a couple of questions from the American press. I would hope that the South Korean press would be willing—we'll alternate.

Fournier [Ron Fournier, Associated Press].

North Korea

Q. Mr. President, the Secretary of State just told us that you made it clear you would not be fooled by the North Korean regime. Can you expand on that? And are you afraid that the South Koreans, in their haste, their energy to make peace, might be not forcing North Korea to make certain concessions that need to be made?

President Bush. First, we had a very frank discussion about North Korea. There's no question in my mind that the President of the Republic of Korea is a realist. He knows exactly with whom we're dealing. He's under no illusions. I also told the President that we look forward to, at some point in the future, having a dialog with the North Koreans, but that any negotiation would require complete verification of the terms of a potential agreement.

And so I look forward to strengthening our relationship, first and foremost. And we will have a constant dialog as to the progress that is being made on the Peninsula, and our foreign policy will respond in a way that will reinforce the efforts of the President but at the same time—and at the same time, make it clear to all parties concerned that any agreement must make the Peninsula more peaceful, and we must be able to verify that it is more peaceful.

I am concerned about the fact that the North Koreans are shipping weapons around the world. And any agreement that would convince them not to do so would be beneficial, but we want to make sure that their ability to develop and spread weapons of mass destruction was, in fact, stopped—they're willing to stop it—and that we can verify that, in fact, they had stopped it.

But Ron, there's no question that this President takes a realistic view of the man with whom we're dealing.

Q. Mr. President, do you believe that North Korea is living up to its other agreements with the United States, Japan, South Korea?

President Bush. South Korean press. I'll get you in a minute, Jim [Jim Angle, Fox News].

U.S. Presidential Transition/Korean Peninsula

Q. A question to President Kim of South Korea. Mr. President, you say that you've had sufficient, fruitful exchange of views with President Bush. This is a transitional period in which you have to deal with a new administration, a change from the Clinton administration now to the Bush administration. You say that you do not expect any major changes in the work that you do together. But President Bush has greatly emphasized the pragmatic and realistic approaches in dealing with North Korea. In that regard, do you detect any change, and what do you think is the greatest outcome of this summit meeting today?

President Kim. The greatest outcome today has to be that through a frank and honest exchange of views on the situation on the Korean Peninsula, we have increased the mutual understanding.

On North Korea, yes, there are many problems that remain, but President Bush has clearly expressed his strong support for our efforts to further the dialog with North

Korea. On my part, I have assured him that as we try to advance the dialog with North Korea, we will consult with the United States every step of the way, so that the progress in South-North Korean relations serves the interest of our two countries and that it serves to strengthen peace on the Korean Peninsula.

President Bush was very frank and honest in sharing with me his perceptions about the nature of North Korea and the North Korean leader, and this is very important for me to take back home and to consider.

President Bush. Jim.

Q. Yes, sir. Sorry to go out of order, sir.

President Bush. Do you remember the question?

North Korea/National Missile Defense

Q. I believe I do, sir. There are some other agreements that the U.S., Japan, and South Korea are party to with North Korea. Do you believe that they are living up to the agreements they have made?

And if I could, sir, a question for President Kim, as well. You had said last week with Mr. Putin that the 1972 ABM Treaty was the foundation of stability in the world. Do you still believe that, and were you quoted accurately, sir?

President Kim. On the controversy surrounding that inclusion of that reference to the ABM in the South Korea-Russia joint statement recently, our foreign ministry negotiated that statement with the Russians, and that phrase—in coming up with that phrase we've taken into consideration the documents that came out of the G–8 Okinawa Summit and various other international consultations that the United States was part of.

This in no way reflects our position on the NMD issues. This is not an indication of our opposition to the NMD. The Russian side, in fact, initially very strongly wished to include such a phrase that would indicate an opposition, and we resisted to the very end.

And so when we saw this controversy unexpectedly arising after the joint statement came out, I regretted the misunderstanding. And so I ordered my foreign ministry to come out with an immediate clarification of our position.

President Bush. Part of the problem in dealing with North Korea, there's not very much transparency. We're not certain as to whether or not they're keeping all terms of all agreements. And that's part of the issue that the President and I discussed, is when you make an agreement with a country that is secretive, how do you—how are you aware as to whether or not they're keeping the terms of the agreement?

The President was very forthright in describing his vision, and I was forthright in describing my support for his vision, as well as my skepticism about whether or not we can verify an agreement in a country that doesn't enjoy the freedoms that our two countries understand—don't have the free press like we have here in America.

North Korea-U.S. Negotiations

Q. President Kim, do you believe that it would strengthen South Korea's security for the United States to immediately resume the negotiations that President Clinton's administration had taken with North Korea regarding its missile program? And if so, did you make that case to President Bush today?

President Kim. First of all, we sincerely hope that the North Korean missile issue will be resolved with transparency. But of course, the United States is the counterpart dealing with North Korea in the negotiations over the missile issue. We have not made any suggestion whether the negotiations should be resumed now, or whatever. This is an issue for the United States to make.

President Bush. Let's make sure we get the members of the South Korean press—get to ask some questions, too. I'm not

saying you're being overly aggressive or anything. Any further questions? Did you get to ask all the questions?

Q. Mr. President, one more. Was there any discussion concerning the agreed framework, the Geneva agreed framework, at the summit today?

President Bush. Anybody else?

South Korean Sunshine Policy

Q. Mr. President, what is your general view about President Kim's Sunshine Policy? Do you think that that contributes to peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula?

President Bush. Yes, I do. I do. I think that the idea of trade, flows of capital, will lead to a more peaceful Peninsula. I think open dialog, I think reunification of families will lead to a more peaceful Peninsula. Hopefully, the efforts that the President makes will convince the North Koreans that we are peaceful people and that they need not be fearful about the intentions of America and of the Republic of Korea, that we want the peace. But we must be wise and strong and consistent about making sure that peace happens.

But I believe the President is on a policy that has got peace as its goal and peace as its intentions, and with the right alliance and the right formulation of policy, hopefully, it will achieve the peace that we all want.

Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:03 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to General Secretary Kim Chong-il of North Korea. A reporter referred to President Vladimir Putin of Russia. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Joint Statement Between the United States of America and the Republic of Korea
March 7, 2001

President George W. Bush and President Kim Dae-jung of the Republic of Korea today reaffirmed the fundamental importance and strength of the U.S.-ROK security alliance, which has prevented war and promoted stability, prosperity, and democracy on the Korean Peninsula for over five decades. The two Presidents pledged to deepen further the comprehensive partnership shared by the United States and the Republic of Korea through enhanced security, political, economic and cultural cooperation.

The two Presidents agreed that reconciliation and cooperation between South and North Korea contribute to peace on the Korean Peninsula and lasting stability in Northeast Asia. President Bush expressed support for the Republic of Korea Government's policy of engagement with North Korea and President Kim's leading role in resolving inter-Korean issues. The two leaders shared the hope that a second inter-Korean summit will make a positive contribution to inter-Korean relations and Northeast Asian security.

Both Presidents reaffirmed their commitment to continue the 1994 Agreed Framework and called on North Korea to join in taking the needed steps for its successful implementation. They agreed to encourage North Korea to take actions to address the concerns of the international community. The Presidents agreed on the importance of maintaining close consultations and coordination on policy toward North Korea, both bilaterally and trilaterally with Japan.

President Bush and President Kim agreed that the global security environment is fundamentally different than during the Cold War. New types of threats, including from weapons of mass destruction and missiles as a means of delivery, have emerged that require new approaches to deterrence and defense. The two leaders shared the view that countering these threats requires a broad strategy involving a variety of measures, including active non-proliferation diplomacy, defensive systems, and other pertinent measures. They concurred on the importance of consultations among allies and other interested parties on these measures, including missile defenses, with a view to strengthening global peace and security.

President Bush and President Kim noted that the United States and the Republic of Korea are developing more mature and mutually beneficial bilateral economic and trade relations. Both sides agreed to work together closely to support Korea's economic reform efforts and to address bilateral trade issues. The two leaders endorsed the early launch of a new round of trade negotiations in the WTO.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Treasury Secretary Paul H. O'Neill and an Exchange With Reporters
March 7, 2001

The President. Maybe everybody ought to try to move over.

Assistant Press Secretary Gordon Johndroe. You all heard the President—scoot over. [*Laughter*]

Q. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. I'm trying to get you in the picture.

I'm pleased to be here with Secretary O'Neill and the OMB Director, Mitch Daniels, who are reviewing the cashflow numbers of our country. I think the American people will be interested to know that in the first quarter of the fiscal year, we received $74 billion more than we spent. In spite of the fact that the economy is slowing down, our cashflow coming into the Treasury is significant, which means our taxpayers are being overcharged. That's what that means. And if somebody is overcharged, they ought to get a refund. And I'm calling upon the Congress to give the taxpayers a refund.

Mr. Secretary, thank you for letting me be here. I appreciate you reviewing the numbers with me. You might want to review them with the people here.

Secretary Paul H. O'Neill. Mr. President, it's a wonderful pleasure to have you in the Treasury Department. The numbers so far this year compare to last year, when we had $42 billion worth of surplus at this point in the annual cycle. Today we have $74 billion, as the President said. So we've basically got $32 billion more cash surplus this year than we did last year at this same time.

And I think it clearly makes the case that we've got a structural tax system that is producing these enormous surpluses now that the President has talked about. And I'm very hopeful tomorrow the House of Representatives is going to deal squarely with the first set of issues of marginal rate returns—marginal tax rates, and we'll be well on our way to getting the Senate to accomplish the same purpose.

The President. I think the point of the meeting and the point the American people need to know is that we've set priorities

and funded the priorities, and there's ample cash to not only fund Government, pay down debt, set aside money for contingencies, but there's ample cash to let people have their own money so that they can spend it and they can decide what to do with it.

It's a fundamental debate taking place here in Washington, DC, is whether or not we increase the size of the Federal Government beyond the basic priorities or whether we trust people with their own money.

I'm hopeful and confident that the House will do the right thing tomorrow, Mr. Secretary. I look forward to taking our message to the people. The people need to hear that we've got a commonsense approach to the budget. And the people need to hear these kind of numbers, Mr. Secretary, that you're talking about—that their hard work is producing more cash for Government than Government needs.

We'll be glad to answer a few questions.

National Economy

Q. Mr. President, does this suggest that the economy is not slowing down? Why is the surplus larger than at this time last year?

The President. It suggests that—first of all, the data shows the economy is sputtering. Secondly, it suggests strongly that the taxpayer is being overcharged. And one of the things this administration is going to do is going to go to the Congress and say, "Here are the priorities: Our priorities are public education, the military, Social Security and Medicare, health care for the working uninsured." But by having commonsense budgeting, we're going to also show the people that there is ample money for them to be able to spend. And that's going to be very important to make sure the sputtering economy recovers.

Tax Relief Legislation

Q. Mr. President, how many Democrats are in your pocket?

The President. What?

Q. How many Democrats do you have with you right now?

The President. He's a Republican. [*Laughter*] As many as we can get. This is a long process. And what I look for is the final result. That's what we're focused on. We're focused on this marginal rate cut package that's now in front of the House of Representatives. We feel good about our chances of passing this bill. It would be viewed as a major step toward tax relief and tax reform.

We'll worry about the next package when it comes out of the House, which may be the elimination of the death tax or the marriage penalty. But it's a long process. We've got to get it over to the Senate and get to conference. And we'll be working Members all the way through the process.

Tomorrow I'll be traveling to North Dakota and South Dakota and Louisiana. I'm looking forward to taking this message to the people. The people have got to hear what the Secretary just briefed me on—is that there's cashflow coming into our Treasury, enough cashflow to meet priorities and to fund crucial parts of Government, and at the same time, have meaningful, real tax relief.

Vice President Cheney/Tax Relief Legislation

Q. Are you comfortable, sir, the process is going on in the bipartisan spirit that you called for? And as a second question, did you talk to the Vice President today, and how is he doing? I know he was at the meeting earlier.

The President. He was doing jumping jacks today. [*Laughter*] No, he's doing great. He is feeling healthy. I talked to him on the way back from—right after I got on the ground from Chicago last night. He felt great. He told me he'd see me first thing in the morning for our national security briefing, and he was there. He looks good, feels good, and that's good news.

Secondly, I am comfortable that we're making good progress on tax relief. Those of you who covered my campaign might remember there was a period of time in which members of the media were saying, "Well, are you ready to abandon your plan?" And I said, "No, I don't think so. I think this is the right thing for America." And all of a sudden, now it's exciting for this administration to know that the Congress will be voting on a crucial element, a meaningful tax relief.

As I understand, there's going to be a—people will have a chance to vote for another version of it, as well, on the floor of the House. And that's fine. That's good and dandy. We're confident and feel good about the chances of our view of how tax relief ought to take place. And we're confident that will be positively received.

I know it's going to be positively received by the American people when they hear that we've got ample cashflow coming into our Treasury to meet important priorities and, at the same time, with fiscal discipline, with setting priorities and funding them, and not letting the size of Government grow like it has in the past, that we can make the case that someone's mom is going to get their Medicare check, someone is going to get their Social Security check, and at the same time, people are going to get their own money back so they can make the decisions on how to spend—what's best for their families, how to spend their own money.

And that's the fundamental crux of this debate. The crux of this debate is, do we want to explode the size of the Federal Government, do we want to increase these baselines of the Federal Government, or do we want to have fiscal responsibility, commonsense approach to the budgeting, and trust people with their own money? And tomorrow is going to be an important step toward trusting people with their own money.

Q. Thank you.

The President. See you in Fargo.

NOTE: The exchange began at 1:53 p.m. in Secretary O'Neill's office at the Department of the Treasury. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to Employees at the Department of the Treasury
March 7, 2001

Thank you. I'm glad the Secretary invited me back. It's always nice to call on your neighbors. And as you know, we're neighbors. I get to look at this majestic building every day, and I was looking forward to the opportunity to come over and thank all the folks who work here.

We're in this deal together. Our job is to make sure that this great country fulfills its promise for everybody. And I know a lot of times people don't give you the proper—your proper due, your proper thanks for working on behalf of the American people. So from the 43d President, thank you for what you do for America. I appreciate your hard work.

I hope you're as excited about your job as I am—[*laughter*]—about mine. [*Laughter*] It's a huge honor to be your President. It really is. And it's a huge honor to be the President of the people. As you know, I'm taking to the road on occasion. Tomorrow I'm going to Fargo, North Dakota, and South Dakota and Louisiana. I decided to drop in on my own home State of Texas for the weekend. But it is so refreshing to be able to take a message to the people that in Washington we listen to you, that

we understand we're the servants of the people.

So I look forward to going to work every morning here, but I also look forward to taking the message that I'm—the particular message that I'm dealing with at the moment to the people. Right now we're talking about tax relief and tax reform. I've got a good partner in this effort in your Secretary.

By the way, you'll find him to be a pretty darn unusual man. [*Laughter*] He is successful. He thinks outside the box in a positive way. When given a task, he's performance oriented. He's going to expect the same of you all, but he'll be eminently fair. He will listen. He will work to build a team. That's the kind of man he is. But first things first—I got to see this firsthand when I swore him in—he's got his priorities straight. He loves his family. His wife and children and grandchildren are his priority. And that's important—that's important.

We'll spend a lot of time talking about taxes right now, and by the way, I feel like we're going to have a pretty good day in the House of Representatives tomorrow. The message is slowly but surely getting out that we've got enough money coming into the Treasury to meet important obligations, but we've also got enough money to remember who paid the bills in the first place, and those are the working folks, the people who pay the taxes. And I think we're going to have a good day tomorrow.

And there will be other issues we'll be talking about: of course, the Treasury Department, and many of you work on issues relating to trade and collection, law enforcement. There's a lot of issues that take place here. But there's no bigger issue than to remember priorities in life. There's no bigger issue—the way I like to put it is this: There's no bigger issue for the President to remind the moms and dads of America, if you happen to have a child, be fortunate to have a child, your biggest priority is going to be to love your children. There's no bigger responsibility.

Some might say, "Well, that message just doesn't seem to fit in the Treasury Department." [*Laughter*] No, it fits everywhere. It fits all departments, because our jobs are to not only represent the people, but our job is to work on the collective will of the country, to uplift this country, to make sure the best is available for all who are willing to work for it. And it starts with teaching our children right from wrong.

If you find a neighbor in need—I know inside the walls here, people go out of their way to mentor, and I want to thank you for that. If you're in your neighborhood, in your community, and you find a neighbor in need and you turn to that neighbor and say, "What can I do to help," I want to thank you for that. The greatness of America really is as a result of the collective hearts of decent, caring people.

At any rate, I love being your President. I'm honored to be on the same team that you're on. And I'm so pleased that you've got a really good man running this Department, a man who will remind you on a constant basis—a man who will remind you, and probably remind me on occasion, that it's the results that matter, that working hard is good, but that we all stand here to represent the American people.

Thank you for your hard work, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:10 p.m. outside Treasury Secretary Paul H. O'Neill's office.

Remarks on Departure for Fargo, North Dakota
March 8, 2001

House Vote on Tax Relief Legislation

In a couple hours, the House of Representatives will be voting on tax relief. I'm confident they'll do the right thing. The message is loud and clear that we've got ample revenues to fund our priorities, to pay down debt, to set aside money for a contingency, and ample revenues to send money back to the people who pay the bills, the taxpayers. I strongly believe, and I hope the House of Representatives sends the message, that the people of America are overtaxed and deserve a refund. I'm looking forward to hearing the verdict of the vote.

I'm also looking forward to continuing my trip around the country. We're off to North Dakota and South Dakota and Louisiana, and the message is the same: When you have a President and a Congress that works together to set priorities, to set the focus of the country on important matters when it comes to spending, when we stop the growth, the rapid escalation of the growth of the Federal budget, we can meet priorities and have meaningful, real tax relief. And it's needed. It's needed not only to provide a kick-start to our economy; it is needed because many Americans today are struggling to make ends meet. And so I'm confident the Congress will do the right thing.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:35 p.m. on the South Grounds at the White House.

Remarks at North Dakota State University in Fargo
March 8, 2001

The President. Thank you very much. The air may be cold, but the reception is unbelievably warm. Thank you all for that warm reception.

Governor, thank you very much. I appreciate you and Mikey meeting me at the airport. It's good to see public servants, such as your Governor, who are willing to do what they think is right. He follows the footsteps of a good friend of mine, a man who did a fine job as the Governor of North Dakota over the past years, and that's Ed Schafer. It's good to see Ed here, as well.

I don't want to jump the gun on my speech here, but I just got off the phone with the Speaker of the House. He informed me that the House of Representatives just took a major vote on—a vote on a major portion of my tax relief package, and by the margin of 230 to 198, the tax rate cut passed the House of Representatives. The American people—the American people had a victory today. The American family had a victory today. The American entrepreneur had a victory today. One House down, and now the Senate to go.

I'm here for a lot of reasons. One is to ask for your help. I wasn't sure how many folks were going to show up to hear a budget speech. It seems like a lot of people are interested in the national budget and, more particularly, your own personal budgets. And so I'm here to ask for you, if you like what you hear today, to maybe e-mail some of the good folks from the United States Senate from your State. If you like what you hear, why don't you just give them a call or write them a letter and let them know that the people are

speaking. You see, one of the important things for the President—and if the truth be known, people who hold Federal office—is to make sure you get out of Washington, DC, on a regular basis.

It is important to make sure you get outside the DC scene and listen to the people. I'll tell you, I love traveling our country. I'm so proud to be landing in Air Force One and getting off the airplane and driving into this hall and seeing people lining the streets, waving at the office of the President. It makes me proud to be your President. No, they wave because they respect the office. And sometimes, at least in this State, it seems like the people like the occupant, too. It's a huge honor to be your President. It's a huge honor.

One of the things I hope the people figure out about me is that I like to bring commonsense approaches to our Government. Take budgeting. It seems like we need to have a commonsense approach on how we spend the people's money, which means it's important to set priorities. You set priorities in your family budgets; the Federal Government ought to set priorities with your money.

Let me describe some of our priorities. Educating our children is a priority. But lest you think I forgot where I came from, I want you to understand I firmly believe that the people who are best able to run the schools in North Dakota are the citizens of North Dakota. I believe in strong—mine is an administration—mine is an administration that strongly supports local control of schools. But we also understand in Washington that we need to set high standards; that every child, regardless of his or her background, can learn; that we must have the highest of high expectations; and that we must work with States and local jurisdictions to measure so that we know whether or not we're leaving any child behind in America today.

Not only today do we have good news out of the House of Representatives, but the Senate Education Committee passed our education reform package 20 to 0. We're making progress because these pieces of legislation are right for America. These aren't political documents; this is public policy that's good for American families and American children.

So education is one of our priorities. We've increased spending for education, but we've also insisted upon more flexibility so Governors and local folks can use Federal dollars to meet their specific needs. One size does not fit all when it comes to the education of American children.

Secondly, a priority is to keep the peace. In order to keep the peace, our military must be well paid and well housed and well trained. So my budget sets aside money for increasing military pay, but as importantly, it is important to have a Commander in Chief who sets a clear mission for the military. And the mission of the United States military must be well—to be well trained and well prepared to fight and win war and, therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place.

Another priority is the health care of our citizens. We've set aside money in the budget to make sure the working uninsured have got the capacity to purchase health insurance. We've set aside money in the budget to make sure we fulfill the promise to our senior citizens, by doubling the Medicare budget over the next 10 years. We've set aside money in the budget to increase the number of community health centers around America, to make sure the poor have got access to primary care. We've set our priorities, and the health care of our citizenry is a priority.

Another priority is the retirement accounts of the U.S. citizens. We've set aside all the money—all of the money aimed for Social Security will be spent on only one thing, Social Security. The days of the Congress dipping into the Social Security Trust for other programs are over. And by the way, down the road, we're going to be thinking differently about Social Security.

You see, the Social Security Trust now only earns 2 percent on your money.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Yes. I'd be booing, too. [*Laughter*] What we need to do is to give younger workers the option of taking some of your own money and managing it in personal savings accounts.

Ours is a budget that sets priorities. We've actually grown what they call the discretionary spending by 4 percent. That's greater than the rate of inflation. That's greater than the increase in disposable income. That's a significant increase in expenditures.

But the debate is, it's not as big as some of the big spenders in Washington would like it to be. You see, they're used to a different attitude out of the White House. The discretionary spending at the end of last year increased by 8 percent. So we're saying we're going to meet our needs, but we're just not going to spend the people's money quite as extravagantly as has been done in the past. That's called commonsense fiscal responsibility. That's the kind of message the people in North Dakota like to hear.

I was in Council Bluffs, Iowa, the other day, taking this message around to the people. And a grandmother gave a speech—or talked a little bit, and she said, she's had a lot of children go through her house and a lot of grandchildren go through their house, and every time she has left cookies on the table, they got eaten. [*Laughter*] That's kind of how I view the Federal budget. If we leave money sitting around on the table, it will get spent. And so what we need to do is set priorities and clear priorities and work to achieve those priorities.

Another priority is to pay down debt. In our budget we've submitted, we've increased discretionary spending by 4 percent, but we've paid down $2 trillion of debt over 10 years. It's the biggest amount of debt that any nation has ever paid off that passed in history, in the history.

Increased spending, we've paid down debt, and we set aside another $1 trillion over 10 years for contingencies. An important contingency could be making sure that we get money into the ag sector, like we've done in the past year. We certainly hope that's not the case. We hope that the ag economy recovers. We hope that we can increase demand for North Dakota products all around the world.

By the way, my attitude is this: If given a level playing field, if we have free trade, true free trade, North Dakota farmers can compete anywhere, anyplace, anytime. I would like our farmers in America to be feeding the world, and therefore, I am going to work hard to open up markets. When it comes to international trade discussions, the American farmer is not going to be treated like a stepchild anymore. The American farmer—the American farmer will be a primary concern. We shouldn't use food as a diplomatic weapon from this point forward. We ought to implement the Food-for-Peace Program. But if we have an emergency in the farm economy, we've set aside contingency money to do that—contingency money.

Audience member. [*Inaudible*]

The President. There you go. [*Laughter*] And guess what, though? By not overspending on the discretionary count, there's still money left over, and the fundamental debate in Washington is, what do we do with it? What do we do with your money? The fundamental question is, do we increase the size of Government?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. Or do we remember that the surplus is not the Government's money; it's the people's money? The other day, I noticed that the cashflow into the country—the surplus for the first 4 months was $72 billion. That's significantly higher than the first 4 months of last year. It tells me that the American people are overtaxed. That's what that says.

When you're running surpluses that big—when you're running surpluses that

big, particularly with your economy beginning to sputter, it ought to say something loud and clear, if you take a commonsense approach to Government. And that means the folks are overtaxed, and if you're overcharged for something, you ought to demand a refund. And I stepped in front of the Congress and demanded a refund on your behalf.

And so, as I mentioned—so, as I mentioned, the United States House of Representatives began the process, the long, arduous process of providing tax relief for the American people. Today they took ahold of our plan to reduce marginal rates on everybody who pays taxes, and as I mentioned, they passed that piece of legislation. I want you to hear some of the principles involved.

First of all, my administration did not believe in what they call targeted tax cuts, because I don't believe that the Federal Government ought to try to pick and choose winners in the Tax Code. Everybody who pays taxes ought to get tax relief.

So we cut all rates. We drop the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent. And there is a lot of squawking about that, but let me explain to you the rationale. First of all, there ought to be some principles involved at the Federal level, and a principle is the Federal Government should take no more than a third of anybody's check.

But also, a principle is—a second principle is the role of Government is not to create wealth; the role of Government is to create an environment in which the entrepreneur and the small-business person and the dreamer and worker can realize his or her dreams. And the facts are—and the facts are, by far, the vast majority of small-business people in America, the backbone of our economy, pay the highest rate possible, because most small businesses are unincorporated. Most are Subchapter S—many are Subchapter S. And so by dropping the top rate from 39.6 percent to 33 percent, we're sending a clear message to America that the small-business person, the entrepreneur is the backbone of the future of this country.

Our Tax Code is unfair. It's unfair to the small-business people. It's unfair to people struggling to get into the middle class. You're on the outskirts of poverty, and you're working hard to get ahead, and you're trying to raise children—and by the way, being a single mom, raising children, is the toughest job in America. That's the toughest job in this country. And we penalize those on the outskirts of poverty trying to get ahead, trying to get into the middle class. If you're making $20,000 a year and you're earning money, for every addition—you're raising two kids—for every additional dollar you earn, the way they've got the earned-income tax credit and the way they've put you in the brackets, is that you pay a higher marginal rate on that dollar than someone who's successful. That's the facts in the Tax Code. For every additional dollar you earn, if you are making $22,000 a year raising two children as a single mom, you pay nearly 50 percent on that dollar. That's not right in America. That's not what this country stands for.

And so our Tax Code not only serves as a stimulus to foreign capital and the private sector for small-business growth; ours also makes the Tax Code fair for people struggling to get ahead. We dropped the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent. We doubled the child credit from $500 to $1,000. We made the code fair for people working to get ahead.

The marriage penalty is unfair. And the Congress will be taking that up pretty soon, to make sure the marriage penalty is fixed. But let me tell you what else is unfair—and if anybody understands it, it's the good people of this State: The death tax is unfair. It is particularly unfair for American farmers and ranchers. That's particularly unfair. There is a lot of talk about making sure that we have green spaces and open spaces, and that's good, and that's important. But probably the best reform to make sure that happens is to eliminate the death tax so

family farmers aren't forced to sell their farms before they want to.

With us today is the Wightman family. You probably—maybe you know them; maybe you don't. But they're here for a reason, because behind every tax relief plan are real Americans, Americans who will benefit. These good folks both work; they've got Melissa and Paige. Melissa's 14; Paige is 10. They right now pay $3,700 in Federal income taxes. When our plan is fully implemented, these good folks will save $1,900.

The reason I bring up the Wightmans is because I want America to know what our philosophy is when it comes to the people's money. Once we set priorities, once we pay down debt, once we set aside contingencies, it's important for Congress and the United States Senate to send this message to the American people: We trust you with your own money. It's your money to begin with. Instead of figuring out new programs or new ways to get reelected, why don't we figure out ways to let the Wightmans plan for their future?

Now, I know some say, "Well $1,900 isn't a lot." Just ask them what it means. Ask the people who are paying higher energy bills what it means. Ask the people who are struggling under consumer credit card debt what it means to have their own money back. As a matter of fact, we shouldn't take it in the first place.

I'm here with a message. My message is: With fiscal discipline, with planning, with leadership, our Nation can fund important priorities. We can pay down debt. We can meet emergencies or contingencies. But in order to make sure this economy gets a second wind, we better start passing money back quickly. And so not only should we have tax relief; we need to make a lot of it retroactive.

We need to get money in the pockets—so the President gets to make some suggestions, gets to make some phone calls on occasion to Members, but the best way I can garner support is to come to you and ask for your help and to say, there is nothing more powerful than the voice of the people. There is nothing that will get anybody's attention more than good, hard-working people, standing up, saying, "Let's have some common sense up in the Nation's Capital about our money."

And it's so important to trust the American people, so important for our Government to trust people, because the people are the strength of this country. This is a fabulous land. It's the greatest country on the face of the Earth, not only—not only because of the fantastic principles—we believe in freedom of religion, freedom of press, the freedoms to achieve your dream, regardless of where you're from—but it's the greatest land on the face of the Earth because of our people. God-fearing, hard-working, neighborly citizens all across America, that's the true strength of the country.

I'll be involved a lot—part of my job is to argue for fiscal sanity in Washington. Part of my job is to represent your interests when it comes to how your money is spent. A big part of my job will be to work to keep the peace by making sure our military is strong. But a significant part of my job is to invigorate the American spirit, that spirit that says, when a neighbor sees somebody in need, "What can I do to help?" You see, the strength of America, if it is in the hearts and souls of our citizens, it must be used to make sure people aren't left behind, that the downtrodden is lifted up, that people in need get help. Oftentimes we turn to Government, but the true love and true compassion in this country begins when neighbors help neighbors in need.

So if you've got a mentoring program in the State of North Dakota that needs some help, say, "What can I do to help?" If you've got a church program that's trying to help people that are hungry, take the extra step and see if you can't help. If you know some people that are wondering whether or not somebody loves them, take

a little extra time, put your arm around them, and say, "We do." I also want you all to remember that the most important job any of us will have, the most important job if you happen to be a mother or dad, isn't President or Governor, is to love your children with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind.

Now, we're a blessed nation. We can achieve anything we set our mind to. We can have sound fiscal policy. We'll work hard to keep the peace. But most of all, we can make sure this great American experience shines brightly for every citizen, everybody in this great country. People are willing to roll up their sleeves and work, because we've got a country of people who are willing to roll up their sleeves and help.

I can't tell you what an honor it is to be your President. I am so grateful—I am so grateful that so many came out to say hello.

God bless you all, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:18 p.m. in Bison Arena. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. John Hoeven of North Dakota and his wife, Mikey.

Remarks in Sioux Falls, South Dakota
March 9, 2001

Thank you all very much. I am glad to be here in South Dakota. I was telling the good Governor, the air may be a little chilly, but the people are awfully warm.

I want to thank your warm hospitality. I particularly want to thank those who were on the road waving to us as we came in and those who have lined up outside the hangar. It's really—it really makes me feel great to be here. Thank you for your hospitality.

I'm so proud to be able to call your Governor my friend. He's a good man, Janklow. He's kind of hard to settle down, sometimes. [*Laughter*] But the thing I like about him is he married well—[*laughter*]—he's honest, and he loves the people—and he loves the people.

Earlier today, we toured a community health center here in Sioux Falls. And I was honored and so pleased that the minority leader in the Senate, Tom Daschle, greeted me. It's very thoughtful of him to do so. I appreciate—I appreciate the dialogs we have had. He treats me with respect; I will treat him with respect.

I'm also appreciative of the fact that we've got two United States Congressmen on the stage with me today: a very capable, strong, able man from South Dakota, John Thune; and I've noticed you've relaxed your border policy and allowed Congressman Mark Kennedy from Minnesota to come today, too. I appreciate these two men being here. It gives me a chance to personally thank them for casting an important vote on behalf of the American people yesterday, when they cast a vote to cut the taxes on the people who pay the bills. I want to thank you all.

I appreciate the mayor; I appreciate the former Senator; I appreciate my fellow citizens. I appreciate the fact that you've given me a chance to get outside of Washington—[*laughter*]—remember where I came from, to come to the heartland of America. It's important for all of us in the Federal Government to continue to come to the heartland, because it's the land of good heart and the land of commonsense people.

And I am here to talk about a commonsense way to budget in Washington, a commonsense approach for what to do with your money. I want you to understand, first and foremost, all the talk about the surplus. The surplus is not the Government's money. The surplus is the people's money; it's the hard-working people of America's money.

And I'm going to remind the good folks in the Nation's Capital, some of whom don't need reminding, some of whom may need to be occasionally reminded, that we work for you. And it's your money we're talking about when it comes to setting budgets. It's important to be fiscally sound and fiscally responsible with your money, which starts with setting priorities, clear priorities. And so I want to share some of the priorities that I've set.

First, educating our children is a important priority for our Nation. So we spend money on public education—but I always remember where I came from. I hope you don't get too nervous, Governor, because I have always believed and will always believe in local control of schools. And so, while the Government will spend money, we've got to trust you to run your schools.

We got a good vote out of the Senate Education Committee that passes power out of Washington, so the local folks can chart the path to excellence for every child. Education is a priority, but it must be a priority in the context of empowering local folks and strong accountability measures and trusting parents and always challenging failure. Because in our vision, there are no second-rate children in this great land of ours, and there are no second-rate dreams in America.

Health care is an issue, and it's a priority. I believe we ought to double the amount of patients we cover in community health centers, to make sure that the poor and those on the outskirts of poverty are able to find primary care.

I know we've got to make sure we take care of our elderly, and so we've doubled the Medicare budget in my budget. It says loud and clear to our seniors, the promises that we have made to you will be a promise we will keep. But it also requires new thinking and new leadership. We must reform Medicare to give seniors more options, more choices, more opportunities to tailor their health care programs to meet their needs, all of which ought to include prescription drug benefits for our seniors.

A priority is to work with States on important development projects. And the Lewis and Clark Rural Water Project is a project that will be in my budget and something that we can work together on.

Our retirement systems are a priority in the budget. And so we've sent the clear message to the Congress—and it's being well received, by the way, by both Republicans and Democrats—that the payroll taxes, all your hard-earned taxes aiming for Social Security, will be only spent on one thing, and that's Social Security—that we set aside that money.

One of the biggest jobs I have is to serve as the Commander in Chief, and I do so proudly. I want to be the Commander in Chief of troops that have got high standing and high morale, people that have got a clear mission stated to them by the Commander in Chief, which is to make sure our military is properly trained, ready to fight and win war and, therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place. So a priority is to make sure our military is better paid, better housed, and better trained.

Those are priorities of ours. We grow what's called the discretionary part of the budget by 4 percent. That's greater than the rate of inflation. That's a lot of money, by the way, when you're talking in terms of billions. We grow the budget.

But if you listen to the voices of those who would rather keep your money in Washington, DC, they say we can't meet the needs. I'm telling you, we can meet the needs with the right kind of priorities.

We can meet the needs with the right kind of focus.

So we grow that budget, but the problem is, some of the folks in Washington are used to spending orgies. At the end of the last session, the discretionary spending grew at 8 percent. I mean, it's like, "Let's have a contest to see who can spend the most in order to get out of town." Those days are over. We're going to bring some fiscal sanity to the budget.

We can meet our priorities, and we can fund them. And we can also pay down debt. I know a lot of folks around America are worried about national debt, as am I. We pay down $2 trillion of debt over the next 10 years. That's all the debt that's available to be retired without having to pay a premium for prepaying debt. That's a lot of debt retirement. It will be the biggest repayment of debt in the history of the world. And so we pay down debt.

In order to make sure that the American people are comfortable with our plan, we also set aside a trillion dollars over 10 years for contingencies, emergencies, money for the unforeseen. So people say, "What do you mean by that?" Well, I'm concerned about the agricultural sector here in our country, the agricultural economy.

I want to increase demand for South Dakota products. I believe that the South Dakota farmer and rancher is the best in the world. And if given the opportunity, they can compete with anybody in the world, so long as the opportunity is fair. So my administration will work hard to increase demand for South Dakota products. When it comes time to negotiating trade agreements, we're not going to leave the farmer behind. We understand the significance. But we may need some contingency money to help the farmers transition from the old ways to the market-oriented approaches for agriculture.

And speaking about agriculture, let me reiterate my commitment to value-added processing, to making sure that ethanol is an integral part of the gasoline mixes in the United States.

It makes common sense to set aside money for priorities and contingencies and debt. But there is still money left over. The people are working so hard and long hours and are overtaxed—that there's money left over. And the fundamental debate that's taking place in Washington, DC, is what to do with the money. That's the fundamental debate. And I'm here to make my case: If the American people are overcharged, they deserve a refund. They deserve some money back.

It's really a matter of who you trust. It's a matter of trust. Once the priorities are met, once debt is repaid, once the money is set aside in case something goes wrong, it's who do you trust? And I want to make it clear to the people of South Dakota: I trust you, rather than the Government, to spend your money. I trust you.

I also don't trust the Congress to pick winners and losers in the Tax Code. You're going to hear the words "targeted tax cuts." That means a group of folks get to decide who is targeted in and who is targeted out. That's not my view of Government. My attitude is, if you pay income taxes, you ought to get relief. Everybody who pays taxes ought to get relief.

And so, yesterday the Congress did the right thing. They heard the call that if we're going to have tax relief, reduce all rates. And we have done so. We've made the code—we're trying to make the code more simple.

We've dropped the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent and increased the child credit from $500 to $1,000 per child. And there is a reason, and the Congress must hear the reason. It's because we want the code to be more fair—that if you're living on the outskirts of poverty and you're struggling to get ahead, today's Tax Code penalizes hard-working people.

I want you all to remind folks who need to be reminded, that if you're making about $22,000 a year and you're a single mom

raising two kids, which I know and many of you know is the toughest job in America—that's the hardest work in this country. For every additional dollar under this code—under this code that some label progressive—for every additional dollar that hard-working lady earns, she pays nearly 50 percent tax. The way the code is structured, she loses part of her earned-income tax credit. She pays the 15 percent bracket. She's paying her payroll taxes. She pays more on the margin than Wall Street bankers do. And that's not right, and that's not fair. And we're going to do something about it in the Tax Code.

We're also dropping the top rate from 39.6 percent to 33 percent. There's a lot of hollering about that. A lot of people—you know, they like the targeted tax cut, "We're going to try to pick and choose the winners." But I want you all to remember this, that an integral part of America is the small-business owner. The small-business owner not only provides many of the new jobs we create, but the entrepreneur and the small-business owner represents the best of America. It talks about the American Dream and the American experience of starting and owning your own business. There are a lot of folks who have come to this country, whether or not America is meant for them, and they start their business, and they work hard, and they own a piece of the future. That's what America is about. And I want you to remind the skeptics and the naysayers and the doubters that many small businesses are unincorporated, many are what they call Subchapter S, and they pay the highest marginal rate in the Tax Code. And by dropping the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent, we provide capital infusion into the small-business sector of America. This is a plan that is good for the entrepreneur and small-business people. It makes sense to be that way.

And by the way, there is a need to make this happen quickly. We got a issue with our economy. It's beginning to sputter. It's beginning to get a little shaky. And one way to make sure that we provide a second wind to the economy is to give people their own money back. That's called economic recovery.

And so I appreciate so very much the Congress working with the White House to make the tax relief retroactive. In other words, when we pass the bill, it will be as if it went into effect on January first of this year, to get money in your pockets quicker.

I also want to thank those 10 Democrats who voted with us yesterday. People are beginning to hear from the people. People are beginning to hear. The elected Members are beginning to hear from the people. That's why I'm here. I want to remind you that you all have an incredibly positive effect. You can help a lot, and I appreciate so very much——

[*At this point, a small fire broke out in one of the spotlights hanging above the crowd.*]

The President. As I said, you can have a positive effect. [*Laughter*] It's a sign from above. I'll keep an eye on it. [*Laughter*]

Let me say one thing, quickly. I am concerned about our economy. And therefore, today, in order to make sure our transportation hubs continue to flourish and we continue to fly, I'm issuing an Executive order to protect the flying public in a time when Northwest Airlines and the mechanics are having trouble resolving differences, and they need time to do so. This order that I signed today will prevent any disruption of air service for the next 60 days.

It is significant to the people living in South Dakota that I do this. Northwest is the first airline this year to reach a critical point in labor/management negotiations. Several other negotiations involving other national carriers face deadlines within the next few weeks, and I am concerned about their impact, concerned about what it could mean to this economy. And I intend to

take the necessary steps to prevent airline strikes from happening this year.

I urge the National Mediation Board to make sure that the parties work toward a solution and negotiate in good faith. It's important for our economy, but more important, it's important for the hard-working people of America to make sure air service is not disrupted.

I'm watching. And I'm winding down, but I want to do one other thing. I want to remind you that tax relief is good for families. It's good for our families. And it is going to be better for families when we do something about the marriage penalty in the Tax Code. The Tax Code is unfair to farmers and small-business people. We need to get rid of the death tax in the Tax Code.

There's a lot of talk about taxes. I want to put a face on taxes. I want people to understand that tax relief is real for people. We've got the Hagen family here. You all stand up, Scott—and their family, Tiffany and Christian and Austin and Kyler. This is a hard-working family. They're raising their three children. They now pay $1,500 in Federal income taxes. When it's all said and done, after the Congress passes its plan and when it's all said and done, they'll end up paying zero in Federal income taxes.

Now, I know they're going to say, and you'll hear them say in some of the parlors around the country, "You know, 1,500, that's not much." Just ask the Hagens. Just ask the working families who have energy bills that are high. Ask the people—I want the skeptics to ask the question to people, what it's like to have huge consumer debt. There's a lot of talk about debt at the national level. We need to worry about debt in the communities all around America. No, that $1,500—$1,500 may not mean a lot to some. It means a lot to the Hagens, and there's a principle involved. And the principle is, we trust them to spend the 1,500 the way they see fit. It's their money to begin with.

And so I'm here to thank you for your support, thank you for your friendship, and ask for your help. You're just an e-mail away from making a difference in somebody's attitude.

It's the right thing to do. This is commonsense approach to your money. It's the commonsense approach. It requires some discipline. It requires reordering priorities. And the priority with your money is not to grow the Federal Government; the priority of your money is so you can grow your own families and meet your own needs and meet your own responsibilities.

And that, after all, is what's important about America, responsibility. We have a responsibility—those of us elected to office have a high responsibility—responsibilities that I will keep. But it doesn't just start in Washington, DC. It starts in neighborhoods. At the community health center today, I had the honor of meeting people who assume the responsibility of not only providing health care but of saying to a neighbor in need, "What can I do to help?" They call it the heartland because people have got good hearts in this part of the world. People care about neighbors.

We can argue about budgets, but that's not the greatness of America. The greatness of America is our people, the fact that we've got people who care about somebody. And so I urge you, become a Boy Scout or Girl Scout leader to teach a youngster right from wrong. I urge you—I urge you, don't hope that Washington fixes schools; don't hope that the Federal Government waves some magic wand to make the schools better. Get involved with your education systems here at the local level. Thank a teacher, thank a principal for their hard work. If your church, your synagogue, or mosque, you're looking for something to do, find a program that will help mentor a child. Put your arm around somebody. It says, "We love you." America is meant for—you know, the greatness of this country lies in the hearts and souls of our citizens.

My job will be to argue smart budgets. My job will be to represent you when it comes to making sure you've got your money back. My job will be to keep the peace. But my job will also be to call upon the best of America, to lift this Nation's spirits, to set our sights high, to call upon the goodness and kindness of America, to remind the moms and dads of our country, if you're fortunate to be a mom or dad, love your child every day, love them with all your heart and all your soul.

And that's why it's such an honor to be here, an honor to be your President. I'm so optimistic, with the right focus, the right attitude, the right approach, that this great Nation can achieve anything we set our minds to.

Thanks for coming out today. God bless. God bless America. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:03 a.m. in the National Guard Hangar at Joe Foss Field. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. William J. Janklow of South Dakota; Mayor Gary Hanson of Sioux Falls; and former Senator Larry Pressler. The Executive order of March 9 establishing an emergency board to investigate the Northwest Airlines labor dispute is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks in Lafayette, Louisiana
March 9, 2001

The President. Thank you all very much. I'm sure glad I came here to Louisiana. Thank you for coming. I want to thank you all for coming. I want to thank the thousands of people who lined the road on the way in here. I wish the hangar were 10 times bigger, but thank you all so much for being here.

First, I want to thank my friend and your Governor, Mike Foster. I appreciate his friendship. One thing you can say about him is, you know where he stands. And I know he stands as my friend, and I appreciate that so very much.

I appreciate John Cooksey, the Congressman who is here. I appreciate Susie Terrell, who is here. I want to thank Senator Michot for being here. Ernie Alexander, my friend, is here; I want to thank him. My friend Ernest Johnson, who heads the Louisiana NAACP, is with us today, and I want to thank you, Ernest, for coming.

There is one other fellow, a man who stuck his neck out in the course of the campaign. You see, he doesn't happen to have the Republican label by his name. His name is Dan Morrish. He's a Democrat. He put party aside and did what he thought was right for the country. And Dan, I'm honored to have your support. I thank you for your friendship.

And it's great to be here. I tell you, it is important for me to make sure I get outside the Nation's Capital on a regular basis. I love people in Louisiana. I like the idea of coming to bring my message to you. I hope by now the people of the country are beginning to realize that we all have adopted a commonsense message. It's a message of the people. It's a message that understands that the most important element of politics are the people of this country, the hard-working Americans who make the country go.

I get to propose things in Washington. I don't get to vote on them; I'm not a member of the legislative branch. But the biggest influence in our Government is the people, and I know that. So I'm here today in Lafayette, Louisiana, to explain a commonsense budget. And if you like what you hear, you might decide to maybe e-mail

or call some of those who represent you and let them hear from you. If you like the commonsense approach to how we spend your money, it may make sense to pick up the phone or drop a note to people who may not see it our way. That's what politics is all about, as far as I'm concerned; it's the people's will. And I'm here to talk about the people's business. And the people's business is to bring some fiscal sanity to the budgeting process in Washington, DC.

It starts with understanding this important principle, that the surplus is not the Government's money; the surplus is the people's money. And so what makes sense? Well, what makes sense is to set priorities. That's what makes sense. Here's some of my priorities.

Education is a priority; making sure children learn is a priority. So we increase spending at the Education Department. It's a priority of the country. But in case you might think that I forgot where I came from, I'll understand that the people who can run the schools best in Louisiana are not people in Washington, DC, but the folks of Louisiana. So we're spending a little more at the Federal level, but we're going to work with Congress to pass power out of Washington to empower the local folks, to empower parents and teachers to make the right decision for the children of the great State of Louisiana.

The people's health is a priority. Today I talked about expanding a number of community health centers around America to make sure that the poor are able to get primary care. I also want to make it crystal clear in the budget I submitted to the Congress that we have doubled Medicare spending over a 10-year period of time, that we're going to make the commitment that we have made to the elderly. It not only requires more spending, which we will do; it also requires an attitude of reform that says, we'll trust seniors to make choices for themselves—seniors—to match their needs with a variety of programs, all of which include prescription drugs.

And I want to praise one of your Senators from Louisiana. John Breaux and I are going to work on this issue. We will spend a lot of time making sure that Medicare is properly reformed so that the promise we have made to our seniors will be a promise that will be kept.

There's a lot of talk about Social Security, as there should be. The message to the Congress is loud and clear: We're not going to spend payroll taxes on anything other than Social Security. We're not going to take the money aimed for Social Security and spend it on anything else.

There's money in my budget to make sure that we're able to keep the peace by making sure we pay our military folks a good wage.

There's money in the budget for priorities. As a matter of fact, we increased what's called the discretionary spending by 4 percent. That's greater than the rate of inflation. But it's not enough for some in Washington, because, you see, they're used to spending a lot of money up there. The last session, they spent your money to the tune of 8 percent. It's like they had a bidding contest to see who could get out of town. Those days are over with.

We will set priorities and fund them, but we'll be wise about how we spend your money. We don't want the Federal Government exploding in growth. We want the Federal Government to be lean and efficient and focused with your money. And that's exactly what's going to happen with new leadership in Washington.

There's a lot of discussion about paying down debt. I want to remind you, there are two types of debt; there are a lot of types of debt, but there are two types of debt that I worry about. One is debt at the national level. And under the plan I submitted to the Congress, we pay down $2 trillion in national debt over 10 years—$2 trillion. It's the biggest amount of debt repayment ever. There's also consumer

debt, the credit card debt that burdens many of the working families in America. Yes, we talk about national debt, and we're paying a lot down. But you're fixing to hear me tell you, part of the remedy for people who have got a lot of credit card debt is to make sure people get some of their own money back.

We have met priorities. We grew the budget at a reasonable rate, not this fantastic rate that exploded during the last session. We pay down debt. We protected Social Security. We have also set aside one trillion over 10 years for contingencies. Who knows what will happen? And so, we put one trillion aside. That makes sense. That's common sense to do that, it seems like, to me. We may need money for our farmers. And I'm going to tell you something about agriculture in America. It is an incredibly important part of our economy. Who knows what we'll need money for?

So we set aside money to do so, but guess what? There's still money left over. The fundamental question is, what do we do with that money? The fundamental question that I want Congress to hear from you about is, what to do with the money? Do we increase the size and scope of the Federal Government?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. Or do we trust you with your own money?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. There's a lot of discussion about how to get tax relief. I worry about what's called targeted tax cuts. I worry about people sitting around Washington saying, "You're targeted in, but oh, by the way, you're targeted out." It seems like, to me, the fairest way to handle the people's money is to say that everybody who pays taxes ought to get relief. The Federal Government ought not to try to play favorites. It's likely people in Louisiana may not be considered a favorite. You will be, as far as this President is concerned.

So the plan that was passed out of the House—and John, thank you for your support—is fair. It reduces all rates on everybody that pays taxes, and it simplifies the code. It drops the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent. It increases the child credit from $500 to $1,000 per child. And let me explain to you why. Let me explain to you why this Tax Code we have is unfair.

One of the things that the people must stand for is fairness in life. If you're a single mother in the State of Louisiana trying to raise two children, and you're making 20-something thousand dollars a year, under the code that's written today, for every dollar you earn above $22,000, you pay a higher marginal rate on that dollar than someone who is successful. You pay nearly 50 percent on that dollar, and that's not right. And that's not what America is all about.

Now, this country stands for rewarding hard work, not penalizing it. And we must understand and—when we find people working the hardest job in America, which is the single moms in this country, and they're struggling to get ahead, we ought to have a Tax Code that welcomes hard work and says you can access the middle class and you can realize your dreams.

This plan that passed the House yesterday makes this code eminently more fair. It also reduces the top rate. And oh, I know there's a lot of discussion about that, dropping the top rate, but let me tell you why. First, there ought to be some principle involved in the Tax Code. And this principle is, the Federal Government ought to take no more than a third of anybody's check.

But there's another principle. And that is, our Nation must understand that the small-business man and the small-business woman is the backbone of job creation. Our Nation must never forget—we must never forget that good public policy will encourage entrepreneurial spirit in America, encourage the growth of the small-business owner.

And we must also realize that many small businesses are unincorporated; they're sole proprietorships. They're Subchapter S's. They pay the high marginal rate. And by cutting the rates from 39.6 percent to 33 percent, we send a clear signal that we encourage entrepreneurship and small-business growth, that we understand—that we send a loud message to Washington that the role of Government is not to create wealth, but the role of Government is to create an environment in which American risk takers and dreamers and people willing to work for a dream have got a better opportunity to realize those dreams.

The plan that we've submitted to the United States Congress recognizes that the death tax is unfair to Louisiana farmers and small-business owners, and we need to get rid of the death tax.

The plan that I submitted to the United States Congress recognizes that when you penalize marriage, we send a bad signal about families and the role of families in our society.

We've submitted a good plan, and it's working its way through the system. It came—a major portion came out of the House, and I want to thank the 10 Democrats that stood with 100 percent of the Republicans that spoke on your behalf. And now it's headed to the Senate, and it's time for your voices to be heard.

Now, I want to give you some ammunition if you agree with what I'm saying. Not only have we got a commonsense budget, in other words, we can afford what I'm telling you—we can afford it—but that makes economic sense to give people their own money back. You see, our economy is beginning to sputter a little bit. There are some places around the country where people are beginning to get laid off; economic growth is slowing down. It is important to act quickly to get people their own money back, so you can spend it and serve as a second wind for our economy. It makes sense—it makes sense. We need it now. And so I appreciate the fact that the plan that came out of the House will make some of the tax cut retroactive, which means when it passes, it's as if it took effect on January of this year.

But there's another reason why this tax plan is important: because it sends a signal about the priorities of our Government, and the priorities of our Government is to trust people with their own money. We must send a clear message that once we meet our priorities, the people who can best handle the people's money is the people, themselves.

Today I've asked the Anderson family to join us here from Lafayette. We've got Richard and Jenifer—and first, I want to say they're teachers, and you can't thank teachers enough for being a teacher. And with Richard and Jenifer are Jane, Noah, and Sam, their three children, who they love more than life.

And the reason I've asked them to join us is to help make my point that when we're talking about taxes and budgets, it's more than numbers that we're talking about. We're talking about people's lives. We're talking about the fact that this is a plan that understands that there are a lot of folks working hard to get ahead.

Remember, we haven't had an energy policy for a while. And anybody that understands that is the people of this part of the world. There's a lot of people paying high energy bills in America now. It's like a new tax on American families. By the way, we're going to have an energy policy, and it starts with finding more energy here in America.

But I'm worried about hard-working folks like the Andersons. I'm worried about the fact that people all across America are paying high energy bills. I'm worried about the fact that a lot of folks have got credit card debt. I'm worried about the folks—the fact that folks are working longer hours. And it seems like, to me, that if you've got a little extra money in Washington, instead of spending it on programs, why don't we let people spend their own money.

And so, here are the facts—here are the facts. These good folks now pay $4,300 in Federal income taxes on an annual basis. Under our plan, they will save $2,600. Oh, that may not sound like a lot to some. It's a lot to me, and it's a lot to the Andersons.

You see, the principle is, do we want that $2,600 that's their money to begin with to go to excess Federal spending, or do we think it's better spent by them? Would we rather have the Government spend it, or would we rather have it for them to save for their children, to meet their priorities?

I want to tell you what a grandmother said the other day in Council Bluffs, Iowa. You see, I've been moving around the country, making our case. And she said, she's had a lot of children and grandchildren go through her house, and when you bake cookies and you leave them on the table, sure enough, they'll be eaten. [*Laughter*] That's kind of how I view that $2,600. If you leave it on the table, sure enough, it will be spent.

The right thing to do, the fair thing to do, the thing to do that's based upon common sense, is to understand whose money it is to begin with and to trust the good people of America to spend their own money to meet their own priorities.

I have great trust in the American people. I can't tell you what an honor it is to be your President and to travel our land and to see people come out and wave. It reinvigorates my spirit, because it helps me understand, yet again, the spirit of America. The true greatness of this country does not lie in the halls of our governments; the true greatness of our country lies in the hearts and souls of the American people.

My job is to represent the folks in Washington and to fight for sound budgets and tax relief. But my job also is to call upon the spirit of this country, is to say to the moms and dads of America, "Your most important job is to love your children with all your heart and all your soul." It's to thank the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts and Boys and Girls Club leaders who are teaching our children commonsense values, the difference between right and wrong. It's to thank those folks who, when they see a neighbor in need, put their arm around them and say, "What can I do to help you, brother or sister? What can I do to help you on your walk?"

No, the greatness of America is our people. It's important to trust the people. It's important to trust the people with their own money. But it's also important for our President to understand that by rallying the spirit of America, we can trust the people to make America a compassionate, decent place for all of us who are fortunate enough to live in this land.

I'm proud to be your President. Thank you for coming. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:30 p.m. in a hangar at Lafayette Regional Airport. In his remarks, he referred to State Senator Michael J. Michot; State Representatives Ernie Alexander and Dan W. "Blade" Morrish; and Suzanne Haik Terrell, commissioner, Louisiana Department of Elections and Registration.

The President's Radio Address
March 10, 2001

Good morning. On Thursday the House of Representatives voted in favor of my tax relief plan, a large step toward the first broad tax reductions in a generation. The House approved the toughest part of my

package to get passed, reduced tax rates, with the support of several Democrats.

We have made a good start, with the help of a lot of Americans who contacted their Members of Congress. Thank you all so very much. Support for tax relief is building. Now I urge the Senate to move quickly also.

Our economy is sputtering. Economic growth has been stalled. Consumer confidence is falling. We can't just stand by and hope for the best. We must act and act now to get ahead of this problem and blunt or reverse this slowdown. And the best way to respond is to get more money into the hands of Americans, who will buy products and build businesses and create jobs. We must put more fuel into the engine of this economy, and that's what my tax relief package will do.

My overall budget plan funds important priorities like education. It pays down our national debt at a record rate. It sets aside nearly a trillion dollars in a contingency fund for future needs and emergencies. And we still have surplus money left over for broad, fair, responsible tax relief.

High tax rates punish hard work and enterprise, values America has always tried to reward. And high tax rates are particularly damaging during an economic slowdown. They act like an anchor on the economy, a drag on economic growth. High tax rates can make a downturn deeper; they can make a slowdown longer. A time of economic stagnation is exactly the moment when tax relief is most urgent.

Not long ago, the Chairman of the Federal Reserve testified before Congress that tax relief in the past has often come too late to boost the economy. This is why I support making tax relief retroactive, meaning the new lower rates will take effect as of 3 months ago, on January 1st of this year. And that is why I'm asking Congress to act as soon as possible.

There's another reason to act quickly, because many families need some help right away. A lot of Americans are struggling with debt, and some have borrowed against their homes to repay it. These families could certainly use extra money, money that my tax relief plan will offer. Other families will buy some things they need or save for college or retirement.

Tax relief is good for our economy precisely because it is good for American families. When millions of families have some extra money to save and spend, it helps kick-start our economic growth. When families are more confident about the economic future, that future gets brighter for us all.

I feel the momentum for tax relief everywhere I travel in this country. Americans know our economy needs some immediate help. Americans know they are overtaxed and overcharged by their Government, and Americans are ready for a refund. For all these reasons, I urge the Congress to deliver tax relief now. And I hope you will urge them to do the same.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 1:05 p.m. on March 8 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on March 10. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 8 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks on Arrival at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida
March 12, 2001

Well, thank you all very much. General Ryan, thank you for your hospitality. I want to thank your base commander. I want to thank the command sergeant who greeted me at the stairs of the Air Force plane that flew me here. The good news is, those pilots know what they're doing.

It is such an honor to be the Commander in Chief of the greatest Nation on the face of the Earth. I'm proud of the men and women who wear our uniform. My job is to set a clear mission for the United States military. The mission of the military would be to be well prepared to fight and win war and, therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place.

Today I'm going to speak to a Rotary Club and chamber of commerce event that will detail parts of my budget that I submitted to the Congress. One part of my budget that I submitted to the Congress will be to make sure we house our military folks better. One part of the budget I submitted to Congress is a pay raise for those who wear the uniform. I believe by focusing our mission, we can improve morale. But I know by paying folks more, we can improve morale, as well.

I look forward to shaking your hands and looking you in the eye and thanking you for serving America. For those of you who I don't get to look in the eye and say, "Thanks for serving America," thanks for serving America. We're counting on you. Our Nation relies upon you to keep the peace, and we will do so.

God bless you all, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:20 a.m. on the tarmac. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Michael E. Ryan, USAF, Chief of Staff; and Brig. Gen. William F. Hodgkins, USAF, commander, and M. Sgt. Karl W. Meyers, USAF, commander chief, 325th Fighter Wing.

Remarks During a Tour of Base Housing and an Exchange With Reporters at Tyndall Air Force Base
March 12, 2001

The President. Donnie, thanks for having us—me, my brother, and about 400 other people in your living room.

Senior Airman Donnie Bryant. I think this is the most I've ever had in my living room, sir.

The President. Well, there are some fine Americans in your living room.

Airman Bryant. Yes, sir.

The President. Thanks for having us.

Airman Bryant. Yes, sir.

The President. So, tell us about housing here.

Airman Bryant. Housing—we just recently have completed our Redfish Point housing, which is the housing right behind my house over here, the new housing. I think you may get a chance to drive by and see it.

The President. Right, we are.

Airman Bryant. This is the older housing. It's about 50 years old, built to the standards at the time. And these houses are totally being refurbished. We have kitchens being redone in them. The electric and all the plumbing and stuff, some of

that's been taken care of. The outside electric has been put to an underground system instead of the overhead wiring that we had for a long time, that actually goes into the house. It saves a lot of problems with power problems around the house. We still have a few problems with plumbing, but I believe they are starting a project on that. We've had some plumbers pull in out back. But overall——

The President. Particularly after they knew General Ryan was coming.

Airman Bryant. Cleaned it up for you, Mr. President.

But the main thing is, I guess we're trying to keep all the houses, the old houses up to par and keep everything maintained and keep the housing conditions livable.

The President. That's my mission, as well.

Airman Bryant. That's where we need our money, to keep projects going and to also make room for new houses and stuff, as well.

The President. That's one of the reasons I've come to your house, to highlight my initiative that I look forward to working with the Air Force on, and base commanders all around the country, to refurbish housing and build new housing. I do think we need for a troop to be able to house his family; that's an important part of building morale in the military.

Airman Bryant. Yes, sir. It is.

The President. Thank you for letting us come by.

Airman Bryant. Thank you, sir, for coming by.

The President. We want Chloe to have a good roof over her.

Theresa Bryant. Would you like to see her room?

The President. Sure. Chloe, would you show me your room?

Airman Bryant. Mr. President, I'll show you back there.

The President. Is everybody going in there? [*Laughter*]

[*At this point, the President toured the house and then took questions from the press.*]

Tax Relief Legislation

Q. Can I ask you your response to all those Senators that are saying they expect you to compromise on your tax cut plan?

The President. Well, there's 100 opinions in the United States Senate, and I respect every opinion. But when they listen to what the American people want, they're going to find out people want something: They want a tax relief that's substantial and real. And I look forward to working with the Senate.

Q. Does that mean you are or are not willing to compromise, sir?

The President. I'm willing to listen to the 100 different voices who've got different views about where this package ought to go. And of course, I'm pleased with what happened in the House. And as I've said all along, I laid out a plan that I thought was the right size to begin with, and look forward to working with the Members to get this done. And we need to do it in a quick way in order to provide a little second wind to the economy.

Q. What about Democrats running ads in the State against your tax package but wrapping that issue around the issue of the Florida recount, saying your brother delivered this State, and now look at what we're getting?

The President. Some of the Democrats here want to keep revoting the election. But if they would listen to America, they would find that Americans want to move forward. Secondly, there are some who would rather spend the surplus on bigger Government. And I have an honest disagreement with those types of people.

The American people, when they hear that we've got enough money to meet needs such as building housing on military bases or refurbishing housing on military bases, if we set priorities and have fiscally sound leadership in Washington, DC, they

will find that there is enough money for tax relief.

And I can understand why some—I mean, I don't understand it, but some people want to increase the size of the Federal Government. And if the people that are running those ads here in Florida want to travel the State and say, "Support us because we want to increase the size of the Federal Government," I think they're going to find a lot of people aren't going to listen.

Thank you all.

Faith-Based Initiative

Q. You're not backing down off your faith-based program, are you?

The President. Oh, not at all, no. Our faith-based—we've submitted a package to the United States Congress. I'm proud of the Faith-Based Initiative. There is a lot of bipartisan support on the Hill.

And somebody mentioned something about an article today. I haven't read it yet. But no, we're moving forward. It's the right thing to do.

Q. Thank you, sir.

The President. Okay, see you all soon.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 11:45 a.m. during a tour of Airman Bryant's residence. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; Gen. Michael E. Ryan, USAF, Chief of Staff; and Chloe Bryant, Airman Bryant's daughter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at the Youth Activities Center at Tyndall Air Force Base
March 12, 2001

S. Sgt. Amy R. Justice. Thank you for coming, sir. We're really looking forward to this.

The President. I'm looking forward to hearing from them. But one of the things I—my job as the Commander in Chief is to boost morale in the military. In order to keep the peace, the military must be strong and morale has got to be high. And I've come to talk about base housing. We want to make sure people are well housed in the military, and there's some money in my budget to do that.

[*At this point, a baby cried.*]

The President. Don't worry about it. Base housing's on the way. [*Laughter*]

I got to see new housing, and I got to see not-so-new housing. And it was important to do so, and I appreciate the general giving me a tour. Anyway, thanks for letting me come by.

And by the way, I'm proud to be traveling with my brother Jeb. If you've got any problems, write him—[*laughter*]—and the two Congressmen from this area. Congressman Boyd and Congressman Scarborough are with us. And of course, General Mike Ryan, who is from the Joint Chiefs. I appreciate you being here, General, as well.

But thank you all very much for giving me a chance to come. I look forward to hearing what you have to say, and it's your chance to give the Commander in Chief a few suggestions. And I'm interested.

I do want to say that I know a lot of families are worried about all the deployments that take place. And we'll honor our commitments. But the mission of this military is going to be, to be ready to fight and win war and, therefore, stop war from happening in the first place. And I think that's important for all of the folks who wear the uniform and their spouses to hear. The mission will be well focused, and that's what we'll be focusing our resources and

attention on. I take it very seriously, because—and I believe strongly that we're going to be able to keep the peace. It's a noble mission for all of us involved with the military.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:16 p.m. at the center, where he was welcomed by S. Sgt. Amy R. Justice, USAF, 325th Medical Group. In his remarks, he referred to Brig. Gen. William F. Hodgkins, USAF, commander, 325th Fighter Wing; and Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to the Rotary Club and Chamber of Commerce in Panama City, Florida

March 12, 2001

The President. Thank you all. Sit down, Governor. [*Laughter*] Well, I'm glad I came. Thank you for the invitation.

Audience members. We're glad to have you. [*Laughter*]

The President. It's one of these responsive meetings. [*Laughter*] Governor—what a good man he is. The key to our success is pretty simple: We listen to our mother. And she is still telling us what to do. I'm listening about half the time.

I appreciate the two United States Congressmen who are here. Joe, thank you very much, and Allen, thank you very much, as well. I'm honored to have you both here. I've had some good visits with both of the Members. Sometimes we agree; sometimes we don't agree. But the thing about these two men is that we're going to agree to be respectful to each other. And that's what this country wants.

I want to thank the members of the Rotary. I want to thank the members of the chamber. I want to thank the economic development folks who gave me an opportunity to come and talk about what's on my mind. Walking in, the man from the Rotary said, "Our slogan is: Create awareness and take action." And that's exactly why I'm here. I want to create awareness about a commonsense budget and ask you to take action to help me get it passed.

It's good to see the leaders of the Florida Legislature, members elected to the statewide—on the ticket here in Florida. I want to thank you all for coming. I know there's a lot of local officials here. I always believe the government closest to the people is that which governs best. So I appreciate you all being here.

It was my honor to go to Tyndall today, to see the good folks who wear the uniform of the United States military, to tell them how much I appreciate their service to the country. I'm reminded today of how dangerous service can be. We lost some servicemen today in Kuwait on a training accident. I hope you'll join me in a moment of silence for those soldiers and their families.

[*A moment of silence was observed.*]

The President. God bless.

I'm here to talk about a budget. And there's a lot of talk in Washington about budgets, but here's what I believe. I believe the people who can best affect the budget are the people who pay the bills in the first place, the taxpayers of America.

Sometimes it seems like we tend to talk to ourselves in Washington. And that's why I like to travel around the country, talking to the people who have got most at stake in the budget negotiations that go on in the Nation's Capital.

First, let me tell you that good budgeting means setting priorities. And part of my travels around the country is to explain where I think our priorities are.

It is a priority to make sure we pay the men and women who wear our uniform good wages. It's a priority in my budget to do so. It's a priority to make sure they're housed well. But it's also a priority to make sure if we spend money, that we spend it wisely.

That's why I've asked the Secretary of Defense to do a bottom-to-top review about missions and spending and research and development dollars, to come up with a strategic vision of our military, not only today but what the military ought to look like tomorrow, to make sure that money is wisely spent when we spend your money on the military. You see, I think we have a fantastic opportunity not only to keep the peace today but to redefine the terms of war, to use our new technologies to redefine how the battlefields are configured, so we have a better chance of keeping the peace.

So we'll set priorities. The first priority is the people who wear the uniform. The second priority is to make sure long-term objectives are clearly set and, as we spend money, to make sure we meet those objectives. But there's one priority of the Commander in Chief that requires no money, and that's to make it clear the mission of the military—to make clear the mission of those who wear our uniform, and it is this: to be well trained, to be ready to fight and win war and, therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place.

A second priority has been education. Now, we've increased the budget at the Federal level, but Governor, don't be too nervous. I remember where I come from. I believe in local control of schools. I strongly believe we ought to pass power.

I know the secretary of education is here. It's good to see you, Charlie. The reason I mention Charlie is, I believe that the people who care more about the education of the children who live in the Panhandle of Florida than anybody else are the citizens of this part of the State. I know the Governor understands that. I know Charlie understands that. And the people in Washington have got to understand that. And that's why I look forward to working with Congress to pass power out of Washington, to provide as much flexibility with Federal money at the local level as needed, so that you all chart the path to excellence, so you figure out whether or not children are learning and, if not, make sure they do.

The temptation in Washington is to say, one-size-fits-all will work. But we know better than that. One size doesn't fit all when it comes to the education of our children. There needs to be local control of schools. There needs to be strong accountability measures. And when we find failure, we've got to free parents to make different choices for their children.

Social Security is a priority. I know there is a lot of talk, and there was during the campaign. I suspect there may be some, and for people who are trying to keep your money in Washington, they'll say, "Well, you can't have meaningful tax relief; otherwise, the Social Security system will fail." You read these polls. They're saying, you know, "Do you want to take away somebody's Social Security check, or do you want to have tax relief?" But that's not the choice. That's not the choice that we have here, as we work on this budget, because we set aside every dime of payroll taxes for one thing, and that is to spend it on Social Security. All this business about threatening people's Social Security checks is just not real, and it's not valid. The Congress and the White House agree that all the payroll taxes ought to be spent on only one thing, and that's the Social Security systems.

There's a lot of talk about health care, and there should be. The budget I submitted to Congress doubles the Medicare budget, for example. The budget I submitted to Congress increases by 2 times

the amount of people who will be taken care of in community health centers. Now, we focus on health, and there is money in the budget to do so.

And so we've set priorities. Education is a priority. Keeping the peace is a priority. The health care of our citizens is a priority. Retirement accounts are a priority. And there is still money left over.

But the difference between this administration and what happens in the past is that we grow discretionary spending by 4 percent. And I said, "Well, that seems like a reasonable number." But that's not what happened last time around. Last time, as the Congress was trying to get out of town, they had a bidding contest, and the discretionary spending increased by 8 percent. That's a huge amount of money. The baselines of the budget were that much higher, and we're adding on top of that.

And yet there are some saying, "He doesn't want to meet basic needs." What we need in Washington is fiscal discipline; we need priorities. We need to set priorities and fund it, so our budget increases by 4 percent.

And by the way, just so you understand the accounting talk there in the Nation's Capital, the definition of a budget cut is when numbers don't increase to expected levels. So like, for example, if the baseline is one and the expected level is one and a half and I propose 1.4, that's called a spending cut. It's the darnedest accounting system I've ever seen. [*Laughter*] That's why I'm trying to bring some common sense into the budgeting of your money.

In the budget I submitted to the Congress, we pay down debt by $2 trillion. Over the next 10 years, we will reduce the amount of debt at the Federal level by $2 trillion. But let me also remind you all, as we talk about numbers, remember there is a lot of debt around our society. There is debt at the Federal level, and we do a good job of paying down a lot. But there is also consumer debt, credit card debt, debt that burdens the working people.

So as we talk about budgets, I just want you all to also keep in mind the budgets of the families who live in your neighborhood, budgets of people struggling to get ahead. You bet we're going to pay down debt at the national level. But we need to be mindful of the debt that burdens those who are struggling to get ahead and struggling to get into the middle class, as well.

Then I set aside a trillion dollars for contingencies. That can mean money to help our farmers. And one of the things you'll find out about my administration is, I respect and understand the importance of American agriculture, not only for our domestic consumption but for international trade purposes as well. Farming is a very important part of our vision for the future.

And after setting priorities and growing the budget at what I believe is a reasonable rate of 4 percent and setting aside the payroll taxes, paying down debt, and putting aside a trillion over 10 years for contingencies, there is still money left over. And that's the fundamental debate.

There's a lady in—there's a lady in Iowa, western Iowa, a grandmother who stood up at an event I had, and she said, "I've seen a lot of children and grandchildren go through my house. And every time I leave a plate of cookies on the table, they eat it." And that's how I view surpluses. That's what I'm afraid is going to happen if we don't have fiscal discipline and are willing to say that the surplus is the people's money. It's not the Government's money; it's the people's money. And that's the important thing for the Members of Congress and the Senate to keep in mind. It's not the Government's money; it's your money to begin with.

And oh, there are some priorities that need to be kept, and we're keeping them. But there's another priority, as far as I'm concerned, and that is, how best to help American families to help themselves, how best to help people access the middle class. And there's another important priority, and

that is, let people have money as quickly as possible, that otherwise would go to Government, to provide a second wind to an economy that's slowing down.

One of the things that concerns me about tax relief is what they call targeted tax relief. That means Federal officials get to decide who's targeted in and who's targeted out. To me, that's not good public policy. I don't think we ought to try to pick winners and losers in Washington, DC. I think everybody's a winner in America, and I think if you pay taxes, you ought to get tax relief. And so I submitted a plan that reduces all rates, on everybody who pays taxes. We simplified the code.

This Tax Code of ours is unfair. It is unfair to people who are struggling to get ahead. Incredibly enough, if somebody has—a single mom, for example, raising two children, if she earns more money above $22,000, she pays a higher marginal rate on every additional dollar she earns than somebody who is successful. And she loses her earned-income tax credit, goes into the 15 percent bracket for the first time, and pays payroll taxes. She's paying nearly 50 percent on every dollar. This is somebody struggling to get ahead, somebody who's working the toughest job in America, by the way, and that's raising children on her own. And yet, the Tax Code we have makes it unfair.

And so we've reduced the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent and increased the child credit from $500 to $1,000, to make it easier for that person to realize her dreams. The message is: The harder you work, the more money you have in your pocket in America; the harder you work, the easier it is to get ahead, and not the other way around.

But we also drop the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent. And I know that's created a lot of howling in Washington, but I think you can help remind people over whom you've got some influence that the whole notion of dropping the top rate is to stimulate growth in the small-business sector of America. There are hundreds of small-business owners who are unincorporated, who are sole proprietors, who may be organized along Subchapter S lines, that pay that high marginal rate. And by dropping the rate, we're sending a clear message to America: The role of Government is not to create wealth; the role of Government is to create an environment in which a small-business owner can flourish, in which the entrepreneur can realize their dream.

The small-business owner is a job creator. The small-business owner also represents the best of America, which says, "If you dream big and work hard, you can own your own business." And by the way, when it comes time to pass that business on to your heir, we need to get rid of the death tax to make sure you can do so.

The House moved out our cut on marginal rates. I look forward to working with them on the rest of the package, including doing something about the marriage penalty and the—we send the wrong signal. Our Tax Code ought to encourage marriage. We ought to encourage families. We ought not to penalize people who said "I do" at the altar.

So there is a lot of work to be done, and I am here to ask for your help. Instead of sending people your check, why don't you send them your check and send them an e-mail while you're at it. Why don't you let your Senators know that you think tax relief is not only good for the economy, but you think tax relief is good for working families here in the State of Florida.

And let me talk about two such people, Darrell Calhoun and Andrea Calhoun. They're here with their children. Raise your hand, Darrell. Darrell is a small-business owner. He owns a fence company. Today, in America, he pays $1,200 in Federal income taxes. When this plan is fully enacted, he will pay zero in Federal income taxes. He and Andrea are raising Garrett and Madison.

Oh, I know some will say, "Well, $1,200 isn't all that much." It's a lot to them. It's a lot to people who are paying high energy bills today in America. It's a lot to people who struggle with their own personal debt. I think it makes sense to set priorities. I think it makes sense to pay down debt at the national level. I think it makes sense to make sure the retirement systems work.

But I think instead of spending on bigger Government, I think we ought to trust people with their own money. I'd rather have these good people spend the $1,200 than the people in Washington, DC. And that's the fundamental debate that's taking place, and I'm glad we're discussing it. It's really what democracy is about. It would be better if they did everything the President said. [*Laughter*] Sometimes it doesn't work that way. But they darn sure better listen to the people. And the people can have a large say as to whether or not we want fiscally responsible Government in Washington, DC, or whether we're going to continue those spending orgies that spend your money on bigger and bigger and bigger baselines of budgets.

It's time to have fiscal sanity in our Nation's Capital, and it's time to remember who pays the bills. It's the working people of America who pay the bills. It's so important, for those of us who hold the high honor of representing you, to trust the people. After all, that's the strength of America, the people. But the great strength of the country is not our governments. The great strength of the country are the people, the people who will help to make this country the—fulfill its promise for everyone who's lucky to live here.

I say that because the common acts of decency and courtesy that take place neighborhood to neighborhood are really part of the strength of America. The fact that there are moms and dads who become Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Boys and Girls Club leaders, that take a child around the shoulders and say, "Somebody loves you," and, "Somebody cares," that's the strength of America. The fact that there are little centers of love that exist because somebody says, "What can I do to help? What can I do to live that common call to love a neighbor like I'd like to be loved myself," now, that's the strength of America. The great strength of our country lie in the hearts and souls of the American citizens.

My job is to lift the spirit of the country. I'll argue on your behalf, and I'm going to argue until I get a bill to sign. It's out of the House. Come on out of the Senate, and I'll sign it. And I'll argue on your behalf. We'll have our agreements, and we'll have our disagreements, but my pledge is to have those agreements and disagreements in a respectful way.

But there's more to the job than just arguing on your behalf when it comes to fiscal sanity in Washington. The job really is to lift the spirit of the country; to call upon the best; to remind the moms and dads, your most important job is to love your children with all your heart and all your soul; to call upon the compassion of America. And by doing so, we, as a nation, can unite, and we, as a nation, can hold out that great beacon of hope. We want it to be for every person who lives in our country.

What an honor it is to represent you all, and what an honor it is to be the President of the greatest country on the face of the Earth. Write your Senators; let your Congressmen know.

And God bless. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:38 p.m. at the Marina Civic Center. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; Representatives Joe Scarborough and Allen Boyd; and Charlie Crist, commissioner, Florida Department of Education.

Remarks on Signing Legislation Designating the John Joseph Moakley United States Courthouse
March 13, 2001

Thank you all very much. Please be seated. It's my honor to welcome you all to the Rose Garden. So many friends and colleagues of Joe Moakley are here—I want to thank you all for coming. This is the first bill-signing ceremony to take place in the Rose Garden since I've been the President. And I'm glad to be part of an event honoring a distinguished Member of the United States Congress.

After today, the U.S. Courthouse located at 1 Courthouse Way in Boston will be officially known as the John Joseph Moakley United States Courthouse. It is a fitting tribute to a remarkable man.

Joe Moakley is a man of strong opinions and broad respect. And in this town it isn't always easy to combine the two, but over a long career he's been able to do so. He's a self-described bread-and-butter Democrat. Others know him as a formidable advocate for his party's cause. Ever since he joined the House of Representatives in 1972, he has made the cares and concerns of everyday people his business.

Joe is not only a passionate advocate for what he believes in; he's an enormously effective Member of Congress. Representative Moakley understands how the United States House of Representatives operates. He knows its rules, and he knows its ways.

But what makes Joe Moakley exceptional is not simply his political skills; it is the fact that he's so well liked and admired by members of both political parties. Joe has a well-deserved reputation for being civil, friendly, and funny. Members love his sharp Irish sense of humor. They admire his courage in the face of adversity. And a few past Members of the Rules Committee even liked his singing voice. Notice I said a few. [*Laughter*]

But above everything else, Joe Moakley has brought honor to his profession. Some people run for office by trying to tear down the institutions of Government; not this man from South Boston. Joe loves the United States Congress, and he loves public service.

Like Robert Kennedy, another son of Massachusetts, Joe Moakley considers politics to be an honorable profession, an opportunity for achievement, and a truly exciting adventure. If Speaker McCormack and Speaker O'Neill were here today, they would have a simple tribute to this good man: Well done, John Joseph Moakley. You served your constituents and your Congress and your country with honor and distinction.

Congressman Moakley.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:02 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. H.R. 559, approved March 13, was assigned Public Law No. 107–2. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Representative Moakley.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Iran
March 13, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice, stating that the emergency declared with respect to Iran is to continue in effect beyond March 15, 2001, to the *Federal Register* for publication. The most recent notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on March 14, 2000.

The crisis constituted by the actions and policies of the Government of Iran, including its support for international terrorism, efforts to undermine Middle East peace, and acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them, that led to the declaration of a national emergency on March 15, 1995, has not been resolved. These actions and policies are contrary to the interests of the United States in the region and threaten vital interests of the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that I must continue the declaration of national emergency with respect to Iran necessary to maintain comprehensive sanctions against Iran to respond to this threat.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
March 13, 2001.

NOTE: The notice of March 13 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Iran
March 13, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), and section 505(c) of the International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1985, 22 U.S.C. 2349aa-9(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12957 of March 15, 1995.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
March 13, 2001.

Letter to Members of the Senate on the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change
March 13, 2001

Dear _____ *:*

Thank you for your letter of March 6, 2001, asking for the Administration's views on global climate change, in particular the Kyoto Protocol and efforts to regulate carbon dioxide under the Clean Air Act. My Administration takes the issue of global climate change very seriously.

As you know, I oppose the Kyoto Protocol because it exempts 80 percent of the world, including major population centers such as China and India, from compliance, and would cause serious harm to the U.S. economy. The Senate's vote, 95–0, shows that there is a clear consensus that the Kyoto Protocol is an unfair and ineffective means of addressing global climate change concerns.

As you also know, I support a comprehensive and balanced national energy policy that takes into account the importance of improving air quality. Consistent with this balanced approach, I intend to work with the Congress on a multipollutant strategy to require power plants to reduce emissions of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, and mercury. Any such strategy would include phasing in reductions over a reasonable period of time, providing regulatory certainty, and offering market-based incentives to help industry meet the targets. I do not believe, however, that the government should impose on power plants mandatory emissions reductions for carbon dioxide, which is not a "pollutant" under the Clean Air Act.

A recently released Department of Energy Report, "Analysis of Strategies for Reducing Multiple Emissions from Power Plants," concluded that including caps on carbon dioxide emissions as part of a multiple emissions strategy would lead to an even more dramatic shift from coal to natural gas for electric power generation and significantly higher electricity prices compared to scenarios in which only sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides were reduced.

This is important new information that warrants a reevaluation, especially at a time of rising energy prices and a serious energy shortage. Coal generates more than half of America's electricity supply. At a time when California has already experienced energy shortages, and other Western states are worried about price and availability of energy this summer, we must be very careful not to take actions that could harm consumers. This is especially true given the incomplete state of scientific knowledge of the causes of, and solutions to, global climate change and the lack of commercially available technologies for removing and storing carbon dioxide.

Consistent with these concerns, we will continue to fully examine global climate change issues—including the science, technologies, market-based systems, and innovative options for addressing concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. I am very optimistic that, with the proper focus and working with our friends and allies, we will be able to develop technologies, market incentives, and other creative ways to address global climate change.

I look forward to working with you and others to address global climate change issues in the context of a national energy policy that protects our environment, consumers, and economy.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Senators Jesse Helms, Larry E. Craig, Pat Roberts, and Chuck Hagel.

Remarks During a Tour of the Youth Entertainment Academy and an Exchange With Reporters in Plainfield, New Jersey
March 14, 2001

The President. It talks about armies—there is an army of compassion in America, too. That's what I'm here to highlight, not only the technology but the hearts.

One of the things our Government is going to do is to recognize the way faith-based initiatives—they take place in neighborhoods all around America. And I believe strongly that Congress ought to fund programs that will allow for low-income parents to access after-school programs that can be run by faith-based programs as well as secular programs.

We ought to ask the question, does it work? And if it works, we ought to empower those who are making it work.

One of the problems we face in society is, Government cannot make people love one another. I wish we could. But we darn sure can find those who do love their neighbor and facilitate programs that will change people's lives.

So I'm honored to be here, and I want to thank you for your compassion and your love.

[*At this point, the tour continued.*]

The President. I'm honored, and I can't thank you all enough for providing a little haven of love and haven of hope. And I want to thank you all for your fantastic music. But more importantly, I want to thank you for the example you've set. All of us who are in positions where people look at us must understand we've got to set examples.

And the drummer was telling me not only was he learning how to hone his skills, but he's learning how to send the right signal to people in his church and in his family about making the right choices, lessons he's learned here. And I am so grateful for your love and your compassion.

Our Government must serve as a spawning ground for social entrepreneurs, many of whom have heard the call to help a neighbor in need through their religion. We ought to welcome faith-based programs into our society, not fear them. And I have come to this program to not only herald what you do but to say to others who are wondering whether or not the Government is going to thwart efforts or enable, that we intend to be enablers.

So thank you for letting me come. And Governor, thank you for your time, appreciate your support. And Congressmen and Mayor and Buster—[*laughter*]—Madam President, thank you all.

[*The President took questions from reporters.*]

National Economy

Q. Mr. President, on the economy, sir, how concerned do you think Americans should be—how concerned are you about the turmoil in the markets and the state of the economy in general? And do you think it's time to start talking the economy up?

The President. Well, I'm concerned that a lot of Americans' portfolios have been affected; people that put aside money in the stock market are now seeing their asset base decline. But I've got great faith in our economy. I've got great faith in the entrepreneurial spirit. And I believe the plans we're putting in place by working with the Congress are going to serve as a second wind for economic growth.

Carbon Dioxide Regulation

Q. Why did you change your mind on making carbon dioxide—regulating carbon dioxide?

The President. We'll enforce our—this administration will enforce the clean air

laws of the country. We will work with our utilities to encourage better efficiency, so as to clean up the air. We've got an energy crisis in America that we have to deal with in a commonsense way. It is important to not only encourage conservation, but we need to increase the supplies of energy, so as to make sure that our consumers and small businesses and large business have got the energy necessary to not only heat their homes but to run their businesses.

Q. What has changed, though, since the campaign, when you said we should regulate it, so now when you say we shouldn't——

The President. We're in an energy crisis now. We're going to have to recognize—our country has got to recognize that we need more powerplants, that we—50 percent of our fuel source for our utilities comes from coal. I'm confident, with better efficiencies, we'll keep improving our air quality. But this is an administration that will address our problems in a commonsense way, and we've got an energy crisis.

Q. How do you respond to criticism, sir, that you have gone back on a campaign promise here?

The President. Ours is an administration that will deal with the problems of the day. We've got an energy crisis in America. We use a lot of coal, and we need a lot of coal to fuel our plants, to make sure Americans have got the ability to heat and cool their homes.

Q. Are you feeling a lot of pressure from industry on this issue?

The President. I was responding to reality. And reality is, the Nation has got a real problem when it comes to energy. We need more sources of energy. We need more powerplants. We need more exploration for natural gas, and we need clean coal technology.

I am concerned that if we don't act in a commonsense way, that our people will not be able to heat and cool their homes. And I'm worried about—a failure of an energy policy could affect our economy, and we're dealing with it in a commonsense way.

New Jersey Gubernatorial Election

Q. This is the first time you've been back to New Jersey since the election, and we have a Governor's race coming up. How often are you going to come back, and are you going to campaign for the new acting Governor?

The President. Well, everybody knows the new acting Governor is my good friend, and I value his friendship. I will be back in the general election to help him win, if he wants me. [*Laughter*]

Faith-Based Initiative

Q. Mr. President, your charitable choice proposals are probably not going to be in the legislation that goes to the Senate. Are you disappointed about that?

The President. First of all, the reports about our charitable choice legislation not going full steam ahead is just simply not true. We're moving on a timetable that we're comfortable with. And part of our Faith-Based Initiative was to make sure we take a full inventory of programs that now exist within the Federal Government.

So we'll move our package, and I'm confident it will get passed. So I really appreciate the bipartisan effort that has taken place. Joe Lieberman has said some very positive things, for example, about our program. Americans are—want to see the Government welcome faith-based programs and a compassionate delivery of health.

So we're going to have a good package, and I'll be signing a good bill.

Q. It's not a setback, sir, that they've decided that there's a little too much controversy on that for now?

The President. I'm not sure what report you're referring to. But the reports I get is that there is bipartisan support for the Faith-Based Initiative. And I'm pretty confident we're going to get a very good bill.

And I appreciate those Members who are working with us on it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:45 a.m. at Grace Episcopal Church. In his remarks, he referred to Acting Gov. Donald T. DiFrancesco and Secretary of State DeForest B. "Buster" Soaries, Jr., of New Jersey; Mayor Albert T. McWilliams of Plainfield, NJ; and Rev. LaVerne Ball, president, Plainfield Interfaith Neighborhood Council for Housing. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce in East Brunswick, New Jersey
March 14, 2001

Well, Governor, thank you very much. I appreciate your kind words, and I appreciate your friendship. I got to know Donny and his wife, and I respect them a lot. And I know the people of New Jersey do, as well.

It's good to see my friend the Speaker. I had him down to the Governor's Mansion in Texas, and I want you to know he didn't spill. [*Laughter*]

I'm honored to be traveling with members of the New Jersey congressional delegation today. We flew down on Air Force One. I am thrilled that Members of the House of Representatives came, Rodney Frelinghuysen and Marge Roukema, Jim Saxton, Chris Smith, Rush Holt, and the newly elected Mike Ferguson. And I want to thank you all very much.

I'm also very pleased that Senator Corzine and Senator Torricelli came, as well. I have been most pleased with the comments that Senator Torricelli has been making. It shows that—I don't want to single anybody out. [*Laughter*] Not one vote is more important than any other vote. But he has shown a lot of common sense, as far as I'm concerned.

I am thankful they're here; it gives me a chance to sing the praises of those in Congress who are joining my administration in changing the tone in Washington. We'll have a lot of debates on important issues. And we're in the middle of one that I want to talk about today. But we're going to show, Senator Torricelli and me, Senator Corzine and me, Senator Holt and me, that Republicans and—I mean, Congressman Holt and me. [*Laughter*] Don't want to be rushing your career. [*Laughter*] But we can show that Republicans and Democrats can differ, but we can do so in a civil way. We can set a better example for people who look at our Government than the example that had been set in the past, that we can have disagreements.

So I like to tell people I'm beginning to see a culture of respect develop in our Nation's Capital, and also, by the way, a culture of achievement that I hope people will judge us based upon results, not how we say things. And recently, the Congress has shown their willingness to focus on results. The ergonomic regulation reform that took place shows a positive development and our willingness of people to get things done.

We got a good piece of legislation moving out of the Senate in terms of education, which I'll talk about in a little while. I mean, we're showing people around the country that it's possible to have a culture of positive achievement in the Nation's Capital, and for that I'm grateful. And I want to thank the Members of Congress who are willing to work together to get some positive things done on behalf of the people.

Joan, I want to thank you very much for inviting me, and I want to thank all the folks who worked so hard to put this event on. We didn't give you very much notice. [*Laughter*] But you responded, and I appreciate your hard work. And I appreciate those who spent hours over the weekend making sure that this event gave me a chance to come and talk about an incredibly important issue, and that's the people's budget.

I like to remind people it makes sense to have common sense in Washington, particularly when it comes to spending your money. And the first principle involved with budgeting is for our Government to remember whose money it is that we're spending. We're working with the taxpayers' money. It's not the Federal Government's money. I like to remind people that the surplus is the people's money, and we better be wise about how we spend it.

And it means setting priorities. It's important for the President to set priorities, to set clear priorities so that Congress doesn't overspend or get exuberant, in their attempts to get reelected, with your money. And so some of my priorities are these: Education is a priority; I think it's incredibly important. So we've increased the education budget by a significant amount of money.

But lest you forget where I came from, I also strongly believe in local control of schools. I believe we've got to trust the people in New Jersey to run the schools of New Jersey. I also believe, though, in return for Federal money, States and local jurisdictions should measure to determine whether or not children are learning to read and write and add and subtract.

I believe the cornerstone of reform is not only to insist upon local control of schools, which means flexibility and authority at the local level when it comes to spending Federal money, but it also means that if you receive help, you and the citizens of New Jersey must devise accountability systems to show us all whether or not children are learning to read and write and add and subtract. And if so, the teachers need to be praised, and the principals and superintendents. But if not, if our society finds children trapped in schools that will not teach and will not change, instead of standing by and saying it's okay, good public policy demands something to challenge the status quo.

Oh, I've heard all the arguments about accountability. Some say, "Well, we can't measure. The Federal Government does not have a role in education and, therefore, should not insist upon results." I disagree. We're results-oriented people in this country. And in return for taxpayers' money, we ought to insist upon results.

Now, I don't believe in a national test, nor do I believe the Federal Government ought to tell New Jersey how to test its students. If you believe in local control of schools, you trust your Governor, and you trust the local folks. But I darn sure believe in asking the question, are the children learning?

I'm told some say, "Well, it's racist to test." It's racist not to test, because the people who generally are left behind in a system that does not measure are those who it's so much easier to quit on. It's so much easier to say that an inner-city child can't learn. "Let's just move him through. Let's have no accountability." It's so much easier to quit on a child whose parents may not speak English as a first language.

No, we need accountability in the public school system. We need results. And we'll herald success, and we need to be bold enough to blow the whistle on failure by giving parents different options if their children are trapped in failing schools.

A priority of mine is to keep the peace. And it starts with making sure the military is well paid and well housed. So in the budget I submitted to Congress, we increased the pay of the people who wear the uniform, and we've got a housing initiative to make sure they're well housed.

It's one thing to pay people well; it's another thing to make sure the mission is clearly defined. In order to increase morale in the military, we must have a clearly defined mission, which is to be able to fight and win war and, therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place.

A priority of mine is to make sure the retirement systems in the country work well, which basically means that all the money going into the Social Security System be spent only on one thing, and that is Social Security. There is universal agreement with Republicans and Democrats in the Congress that we're not going to use the payroll taxes for anything other than Social Security. And that makes sense.

It not only makes sense, good fiscal sense; it also makes sense because a substantive reform that I look forward to working with Congress on is to make sure the Social Security System is vibrant and strong, particularly as we head into the 21st century, which means not only will we guarantee payments to the seniors who rely upon Social Security today, but we need to think differently and let younger workers manage some of their own money in the private markets, to make sure there is a Social Security System around tomorrow.

Another priority is the health care system. And as an example, the budget I submitted to Congress doubles the Medicare payments over the next 10 years—got over 100-and-something million new dollars of spending in Medicare. And that makes sense, because we must fulfill the obligation to our seniors, meet the promise of a health care system that works for seniors. It's one thing to spend money, but the system also needs to be reformed. And we need to give seniors a variety of options from which to choose, all of which will include prescription drugs, in order to make sure the Medicare system works as we go into the 21st century.

So we're setting priorities. Community health centers is an incredibly important part of the health care mix in America. It's a place where the poor or near-poor can find primary care. The budget I submitted doubles the number of people who will be served in community health centers over the next 5 years.

It's also a budget that understands the great role of faith programs in our society. I went to one today, run by Rev. LaVerne Ball of the Youth Entertainment Academy, housed in the basement of a church in Plainfield, New Jersey. It's a place that is staffed by people who have heard the universal call to love a neighbor like they would like to be loved themselves. I've expanded in my budget the amount of money for after-school programs and have said loud and clear: If you're a faith-based program, you ought to be able to access that money in order to provide after-care programs for children who are looking for something other than just the standard old way of conducting after-school programs, who are looking for somebody to put their arm around them and say, "I love you, and I care."

Now, this is a budget that meets priorities. We grow the discretionary spending in the budget by 4 percent. Now, that's where the friction is coming in Washington, because the discretionary spending at the end of last year grew at 8 percent. And when you're talking in terms of trillions, that's a huge amount of the increase of—the role of Federal Government.

So we say to the Congress, "There are not many workers in America who got a 4 percent pay raise last year. Surely, you can live within 4 percent discretionary spending. By focusing on priorities, surely the Members of Congress, both Republicans and Democrats, can live within a 4 percent increase of discretionary spending."

I have made it clear that debt reduction is a priority of this administration, and so we pay down, in the budget I submitted, $2 trillion of debt over the next 10 years. That's all the available debt; that's all the debt that becomes available to pay off during that period of time. That's $2 trillion;

that's the largest debt repayment of any nation at any time in any history.

So the budget sets priorities. It grows discretionary spending at 4 percent, considerably less than the spending orgy that took place last year but, nevertheless, enough to meet the needs. It pays down $2 trillion of debt. It sets aside the payroll tax for Social Security. It doubles the Medicare budget. And there's also a trillion-dollar contingency fund, so there's another trillion over 10 years that's set aside for contingencies. It may be an agricultural issue that we need to deal with. We may need to bolster the payment of FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency. There's money set aside. It makes common sense not to spend all the money, and so therefore, we've got money set aside. We pay down debt; we meet discretionary spending; and there's still money left over. And that's where the battle is. And the fundamental question is what to do with it.

My belief is that once we meet priorities, instead of increasing the size and the scope of the Federal Government, we better remember who pays the bills in America. We better remember the working people. We better remember who created this surplus in the first place.

And so I submitted a plan that says, instead of increasing discretionary spending, let's give people more of their own money back. And it makes sense to do so. It makes sense to do so. Our economy is beginning to sputter. I believe—I was asked about the markets today. I'm sorry people are losing value in their portfolios. That worries me, but with the right policies, I'm confident our economy will recover—the right policies, fiscal policies. And that means giving people money back, in plain language. Or better yet, don't take it in the first place.

And we're making good progress on this issue. We're making good progress. The House passed the cut on marginal rates, and I want to thank the Members of the House who were with me on that. It makes sense.

Let me tell you the principles behind that part of the tax relief plan. I don't believe the proper role of Government is to try to pick and choose winners when it comes to tax relief. See, I don't think there's a right American or wrong American when it comes to those who pay taxes. I think, if we're going to have tax relief, all Americans ought to get tax relief.

So we reduced all the rates on everybody who pays taxes and simplified the code; reduced the rates from 5 to 4; we dropped the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent. I'm asking Congress to increase the child credit from $500 to $1,000 per child, and let me give you the benefits.

The benefits of that are—is this: We have a Tax Code that is unfair for people who are trying to get ahead in life, people who are struggling on the outskirts of poverty. If you're a single mom raising your children, two children, for example, and you're making about $22,000 a year, for every additional dollar you earn in working the toughest job in America, raising those kids—for every additional dollar you earn, you pay a higher marginal rate than a Wall Street banker. And that's the facts. As you begin to lose your earned-income tax credit and go in the 15 percent bracket and pay payroll taxes, the hardest dollar you earn is taxed at nearly 50 percent.

And folks, that isn't right. That's not what the American experience should be. It seems like, to me, the harder you work, the more money you ought to put in your pocket. And our Tax Code ought to reflect that, and that's why we dropped the bottom rate from 15 to 10 and increased the child credit.

But we also dropped the top rate, from 39.6 to 33 percent. And I know there's a lot of people that are hollering about that part of the tax package. First, if you pay taxes, you ought to get relief. But I want the Members of Congress to understand that part of this plan is to stimulate

the growth of small businesses and entrepreneurs, and that thousands of small-business owners in America are unincorporated or sole proprietors, or Subchapter S's, and pay taxes at the highest marginal rates. And by cutting the top rate, we stimulate the growth of small business in America.

Those who would like to leave your money in Washington try to make us feel bad about cutting the top rate. But I come from the school of thought that the American Dream must be alive and well. The role of Government is not to create wealth but an environment in which the entrepreneur can realize his or her dreams, in which the small-business owner can find capital in order to fuel an idea. And cutting that top rate is an infusion of capital for the small-business owner in America, and it makes good economic sense. And it makes good sense to reinforce the American Dream through good tax policy.

This Tax Code is not only unfair to people struggling to get ahead at the bottom end of the economic ladder; it sends the wrong signals. It doesn't make sense and it's unfair to tax marriage in America. We need to do something about the marriage penalty in the Tax Code. And it's unfair to tax a person's assets twice, and we ought to get rid of the death tax in the Tax Code, as well.

This plan is fiscally sound. It makes common sense. We meet priorities; we pay down debt; we set aside money for Social Security; but we also remember who pays the bills. It makes sense for our economy to give people their money back, and that's why I look forward to working with Congress to make sure this tax relief package is retroactive. Senator Corzine and I, on the plane, talked about how we'd make sure money gets in the economy as quickly as possible. And I appreciate his thoughts along those lines.

This is part of an economic recovery plan, but this plan is also good for American families. And the Dietrich family is with us today. Where are you? There you go. Thank you for coming, Mark and Kim and Mark, Jr., and Christopher. And I've asked them to come because oftentimes during the course of these tax debates and budgets, all you hear are numbers. But it's important for me to remind people in America that there are lives affected by our discussions.

And there's a lot of focus, for example, on debt at the national level, and that's fine. That makes sense. But I also want the policymakers to understand there's debt at the local level, too, that a lot of hard-working Americans have got credit card debt. And when you couple credit card debt, for example, with high energy prices, it puts people in a bind. And good public policy frees Americans to be able to make more decisions for their families.

These good folks pay $5,700 in Federal income taxes. When our plan is fully implemented, they will save $2,000. Now, that may not sound like a lot—oh, I know, in this land of big numbers, $2,000 may not sound like a lot, but it's a lot to them. It's a lot to a family who is worrying about high energy bills. It's a lot to a family who wants to put aside money for their children. It's a lot for moms and dads who are concerned about the future of their family. It's a lot. And my attitude is, once we made basic needs, I'd rather have these good people spending the $2,000 than the United States Congress spending it.

It's a fundamental decision where we put our trust. And that's what I want this debate to focus on: Who do you trust? Oh, I love dealing with the Members of the Congress, and they're good folks. They care a lot about their country. But we ought to trust the people of America. We ought to trust them to spend their own money. We ought to trust them to make the right decisions for their families. We ought to have a limited and focused and energetic Federal Government that, when it's all said and done, holds the people up in our trust.

And after all, that's not only important for good economic policy; that's important

to make sure America fulfills its promise for everybody who is fortunate enough to live here. Because, you see, the great strength of the country really doesn't exist in the halls of our governments; the great strength of America is in the hearts and souls of the American citizens.

One of the biggest honors of my job is to be able to travel the country and say thanks to those social entrepreneurs who literally change America, one face at a time; people who don't wait for Government to act and who say to a neighbor in need, "What can I do to help? What can I do, brother or sister, to help you on your walk?" I think of Catholic Charities that provide such incredible service all around America. I think about homeless shelters staffed by volunteers who feel the need to help somebody in need. No, the great strength of this country, folks, exists in neighborhood after neighborhood after neighborhood, where people of religion and people who don't give a hoot about religion say, "What can I do to help a neighbor in need?"

My job is not only to argue good policy on behalf of the people and argue on your behalf to make sure your money ends up in your pocket after needs are met; my job is also to lift the spirit of the country and to call upon the best, to work to unite our Nation, but always remember that the true strength of America is our people and the hearts of our people and the compassion of America.

I'm fortunate to be the President of the greatest land on the face of the Earth. It's an unimaginable honor. And I want to thank you all for giving me the chance to come and talk about a commonsense policy for the budget, but to remind you that if you see somebody in need, put your arm around them; tell them God loves them.

Godspeed to you all, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:35 p.m. in the ballroom at the East Brunswick Hilton. In his remarks, he referred to Acting Gov. Donald T. DiFrancesco of New Jersey and his wife, Diane; New Jersey State Assembly Speaker Jack Collins; and Joan Verplanck, president, New Jersey Chamber of Commerce.

Exchange With Reporters on Returning to the White House
March 15, 2001

First Lady's Arrival

The President. Hey, look who's here.

The First Lady. Hi, everybody.

The President. Barney's back. [*Laughter*]

The First Lady. Barney had a really good trip.

The President. Hey, Spot, look who's here.

Q. Mrs. Bush, where are you coming from?

The First Lady. I'm coming from Texas. I've been at the ranch.

Meeting With Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland

Q. What do you expect out of your meeting with the Irish leaders?

The President. Pardon me?

Q. What do you expect out of your meeting with the Irish PM—Prime Minister?

The President. I had a good meeting, and I'll have one tomorrow, as well. Looking forward to it. We'll be discussing the Good Friday agreement, what I can do to help; be reaffirming our trade with Ireland. We had a good visit with him at lunch.

I'm looking forward to seeing him tomorrow.

Campaign Finance Reform Legislation

Q. Mr. President, are you prepared to send your suggestions on campaign finance legislation to the Hill, and——

The President. Pretty soon.

Q. ——what would you like to see in it?

The President. Well, wait until I send them up there, but we'll be sending some principles up here pretty soon.

Q. Not today?

The President. Maybe today.

Q. Mr. President, to follow up, I mean, do you still support limited soft money contributions?

The President. I think we ought to get rid of labor union and corporate soft money. And I know we need to make sure we have—to make sure that shareholders and labor union members have got a say-so on how their money is spent.

Assistant Press Secretary Gordon Johndroe. Thank you all very much.

The President. Just getting warmed up. [*Laughter*]

Q. Thank you, Barney.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The exchange began at 2:22 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, upon the President's return from the Friends of Ireland luncheon on Capitol Hill. In his remarks, he referred to his dogs, Barney and Spot. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Letter to the Senate Majority and Minority Leaders on Campaign Finance Reform Legislation
March 15, 2001

Dear _____ :

As the Senate prepares to consider campaign finance reform legislation, I wanted to highlight my principles for reform. I am committed to working with the Congress to ensure that fair and balanced campaign finance reform legislation is enacted.

These principles represent my framework for assessing campaign finance reform legislation. I remain open to other ideas to meet our shared goals.

I am hopeful that, working together, we can achieve responsible campaign finance reforms.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

Campaign Finance Reform: President Bush's Reform Principles

Protect Rights of Individuals to Participate in Democracy: President Bush believes democracy is first and foremost about the rights of individuals to express their views. He supports strengthening the role of individuals in the political process by: 1) updating the limits established more than two-decades ago on individual giving to candidates and national parties; and 2) protecting the rights of citizen groups to engage in issue advocacy.

Maintain Strong Political Parties: President Bush believes political parties play an essential role in making America's democratic system operate. He wants to maintain the strength of parties, and not to weaken

them. Any reform should help political parties more fully engage citizens in the political process and encourage them to express their views and to vote.

Ban Corporate and Union Soft Money: Corporations and labor unions spend millions of dollars every election cycle in unregulated "soft" money to influence federal elections. President Bush supports a ban on unregulated corporate and union contributions of soft money to political parties.

Eliminate Involuntary Contributions: President Bush believes no one should be forced to support a candidate or cause against his or her will. He therefore supports two parallel reforms: 1) legislation to prohibit corporations from using treasury funds for political activity without the permission of shareholders; and 2) legislation to require unions to obtain authorization from each dues-paying worker before spending those dues on activities unrelated to collective bargaining.

Require Full and Prompt Disclosure: President Bush also believes that in an open society, the best safeguard against abuse is full disclosure. He supports full, prompt and constitutionally permissible disclosure of contributions and expenditures designed to influence the outcome of federal elections, so voters will have complete and timely information on which to make informed decisions.

Promote Fair, Balanced, Constitutional Approach: President Bush believes reform should not favor any one party over another or incumbents over challengers. Both corporations and unions should be prohibited from giving soft money to political parties, and both corporations and unions should have to obtain permission from their stockholders or dues-paying workers before spending treasury funds or dues on politics. President Bush supports including a nonseverability provision, so if any provision of the bill is found unconstitutional, the entire bill is sent back to Congress for further adjustments and deliberations. This provision will ensure fair and balanced campaign finance reform.

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Trent Lott, Senate majority leader, and Thomas A. Daschle, Senate minority leader, and copies of the letter were provided to all other Senators.

Remarks at a Saint Patrick's Day Shamrock Presentation Ceremony With Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland
March 16, 2001

Taoiseach, thank you very much, sir. We're so honored you're here. Laura and I welcome you and welcome our guests. Thank you all for coming. We accept this crystal of shamrocks, not just as a symbol of Ireland but as a symbol of a strong friendship between our nations, our shared values and shared history and shared hopes. Thank you for continuing this Saint Patrick's Day tradition. And we really appreciate this wonderful gift.

But Saint Patrick's Day is also a time for everyone to reflect on Ireland's many gifts to the world. We are thankful, first, for all that Ireland and the Prime Minister have done to further the cause of peace in Northern Ireland. There's an Irish expression, "The work praises the man." The peace that holds today in Northern Ireland is no small measure a tribute to the Prime Minister and his courageous leadership. And I assured him, and will continue to do so, that the United States stands ready to help in any way that the governments involved need.

The world is also thankful for the thousands of peacekeepers Ireland sends to other troubled corners of the globe, everywhere from Kosovo to East Timor. And we're thankful for the generous development aid Ireland sends to the world's poorest nations.

But Ireland's most precious gift to the world has been the Irish. No nation has benefited more from Irish talent and industry than the United States. You've given us Presidents, nine signers of the Declaration of Independence. In fact, so many Irish served as volunteers in the Continental Army, a lord in Parliament lamented, "We have lost America through the Irish." [*Laughter*]

Today, over 44 million Irish Americans reinforce the natural bonds of friendship between our nations. The United States is proud of our strong ties of trade and investment and proud that they have contributed to the strong economy that you have led. We look forward to working even more closely with Ireland, particularly now that it serves on the U.N. Security Council.

According to legend, Saint Patrick returned to Ireland after hearing the Irish people beckon him in a dream to "Come and walk among us once more." Well, today, it is a world that beckons the Irish to continue walking among us and sharing with us the rich culture, the large hearts, and good works.

So Mr. Prime Minister, America is proud to call Ireland a friend, not just on Saint Patrick's Day but on every day.

Welcome.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:36 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Prime Minister Ahern.

Remarks at a Saint Patrick's Day Reception
March 16, 2001

Thank you very much. It sounds like we invited some rowdy Irish Americans. [*Laughter*] Thank you all for coming. *Taoiseach*, thank you very much, sir. Secretary of State of Northern Ireland, Dr. Reid; First Minister Trimble; Deputy First Minister Mallon—thank you all for being here.

I want to thank the Ambassadors who are here. I want to thank the other leaders from Northern Ireland who are here. It's most gracious of you to take your time to come and celebrate Saint Patrick's Day with us. Mr. Speaker, it's good to see you again, sir, as well.

The *Taoiseach* and I just had an excellent meeting. We spent a good hour of frank dialog. He gave me Dublin's perspective on the peace process in Northern Ireland, just as Prime Minister Blair gave me London's perspective when we met last month. An Irish proverb tell us that a friend's eye is a good mirror. And I can tell you that what is striking about my meetings with both Prime Ministers is how similar their perspectives are, how optimistic they are, and how determined they are.

It is clear that all sides want the Good Friday agreement to succeed. It is also clear that all sides are seeking to overcome very difficult internal obstacles and to keep up forward momentum. The agreement negotiated by both Prime Ministers in Belfast last week is a reflection of a common commitment. As always, we deeply appreciate the efforts.

And again, I want to pledge what I said yesterday: The United States stands ready to help. It is in our national interest that

there be a lasting peace, a real, lasting peace in Northern Ireland.

I also want to say how much I appreciate the contributions that Irish Americans have made to the cause of peace. Many of you are right here in this room, and our Nation thanks you. By supporting those committed to a peaceful approach, you're truly giving something back to your native land.

Today is also about celebrating what Irish Americans have given to their adopted land. The White House itself was designed by an Irish American. This fact about America's home is symbolic of the contributions made by millions of Irish of both Catholic and Protestant persuasion.

Your industry and talent and imagination have enriched our commerce and enriched our culture. The strong record of public service has fortified our democracy, and the strong ties to family and faith and community have strengthened our Nation's character. In short, the Irish are a big reason why we'll always be proud to call ourselves a nation of immigrants.

Happy Saint Patrick's Day.

And now, would you join us, please, for some refreshments in the State Room.

Welcome to the White House.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:38 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland; Secretary of State for Northern Ireland John Reid and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; and First Minister David Trimble and Deputy First Minister Seamus Mallon, Northern Ireland Executive.

Message on the Observance of Saint Patrick's Day, 2001

March 16, 2001

I am pleased to send warm greetings to those celebrating St. Patrick's Day. Each year on March 17, joyous events commemorate the remarkable life of Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland. Born in Britain many centuries ago, Patrick was captured as a teenager by pirates and sold into slavery in Ireland. During six years of forced labor as a herdsman, he looked to his religious faith for sustenance.

Patrick eventually escaped and returned to Britain, where he dreamed that he was being called to serve as a missionary. He began to study for the priesthood and returned to Ireland, dedicating his life to preaching Christianity. Patrick endured hardship and suffering, but his bravery and devotion to his faith became legendary in the hearts and minds of the Irish people.

Centuries later, St. Patrick's Day pays tribute to an incredible hero and to the rich cultural heritage of the Emerald Isle. Countless Americans symbolically proclaim Irish ancestry by taking part in the festivities celebrating the stories and traditions of Ireland. St. Patrick's Day is also a time to honor the contributions of Irish Americans to our Nation's history and way of life, enriching the United States in great measure.

As we move into the 21st century, Americans look forward to continued friendship and goodwill with the people of Ireland. Laura joins me in sending best wishes for a wonderful St. Patrick's Day.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Remarks to Small-Business Owners
March 16, 2001

Thank you all for coming. Be seated. [*Laughter*] Madam Secretary, thank you very much for the kind introduction. I want to welcome you all to the White House, the people's house. I can't tell you what an honor it is to live here. It's been a fantastic experience for me and Laura and our family, and we take our responsibilities seriously.

I want to welcome you. I want to welcome the entrepreneurs of America. First, I want to recognize Hector Barreto, who is the nominee for the Small Business Administration—Hector. And President of the Utah State Senate Al Mansell is here, as well. Al, thank you for coming.

Before I introduce the folks behind me, I'd like to say something about commonsense budgeting, something you get to do every day, something our Federal Government ought to do with your money. And that is, take a commonsense approach about what we do with the people's money. And it means setting priorities, understanding whose money it is we're spending. And the best way to do this is to say, what are our priorities?

Education is a priority, and we need to focus on education. But I also remember where I came from. It's one thing to spend money at the Federal level; it's another thing to make sure we understand how to achieve educational excellence for every child. And that means trusting local folks to chart the path to excellence. The people who care more about the children in a respective community are the people who live in the community. And so while we'll focus some Federal resources, we need to trust the local people by passing power out of Washington, DC, to run their public schools in America, and at the same time, we've got to insist upon results.

You do that every single day with your businesses. The Federal Government ought to start doing that, as well. And so we're going to say, "There's more money for you, but show us whether or not children are learning to read and write and add and subtract. You measure, you show us, so that not one single child gets left behind."

Another priority is the defense of the country. It's a solemn, solemn task of the President to keep the peace, which means we've got to prioritize spending in the military. And it starts with making sure we pay our troops more money. And so my budget says, there's more money for those who wear the uniform and better housing for those who wear the uniform and taking care of the veterans, for those who used to wear the uniform.

Another priority is health care. We've got a plan to take care of the working uninsured by refundable tax credits. We double the Medicare budget over a 10-year period of time. Another priority is to make sure that the Social Security system is safe and secure. And it starts with spending the Social Security money on only one thing, Social Security.

So this is a budget that I submitted that sets priorities. It increases what's called discretionary spending by 4 percent. That's enough to fund our priorities and keep our commitments without overburdening working folks and small-business owners. Now, part of the consternation here in Washington is that I don't want to spend as much money as they used to spend up here. By setting priorities and focusing and remembering whose money it is we're spending, I think we can slow the rate of growth down.

You see, at the end of last time, the last session, discretionary spending increased 8 percent. That's a lot, particularly when you're talking in terms of trillions. And so we've said, "Let's be responsible with the people's money. Let's focus, let's

meet needs, but let's always remember whose money it is in the first place."

There is a lot of discussion about debt reduction, and that's a worthy discussion. The budget I submitted pays down $2 trillion in debt. That's all the debt that's coming due over the next 10 years—that's $2 trillion over 10 years. People say, "Why don't you pay down more?" And for those of you who have debt, long-term debt, know there is a cost to prepaying debt. And it doesn't make any sense to pay a premium to prepay debt with the people's money. That's not good fiscal policy. It doesn't bring any common sense to the budget.

But when we discuss debt, I also want Members of Congress to understand there is more than just Government debt. There is credit card debt that burdens working people. There is debt in the private sector. And it seems to make common sense to me that when we're planning what to do with the people's money that we not only pay debt at the national level, but we give people some of their own money back or don't take it in the first place, so they can manage their own debt, so that small businesses can manage their debt.

I set aside money in our budget over a 10-year period, the 10-year budget, for contingencies. So there is a trillion over 10 that's not spent, just in case something comes up. What I'm trying to do is to lay out exactly what we've got planned for the country. We increase discretionary spending by 4 percent. That's greater than the rate of inflation. That's greater than most people's paychecks have risen by. We pay down debt by $2 trillion. We set aside a trillion debt of contingencies—I mean, $1 trillion of contingency money. And the debate is what to do with the rest, because, you see, incredibly enough, as a result of your hard work and the tax burden on the American people, there is still money left over. And so what do we do?

And by the way, before I tell you what I think we ought to do, I want you to know the assumptions in the plan are conservative assumptions. For example, over the 10-year period it is assumed our economy will grow at 3.2 percent. We can do better than that in America. We don't have to have such a pessimistic view of the productivity of the American people and the ingenuity of the entrepreneurs and the hard work of small-business people. We'll do better than that.

So I want to assure my fellow Americans that the assumptions in the budget are very conservative assumptions. After all, in the first 4 months of this year, the cashflow coming into our Treasury is $40 billion more than anticipated. And it seems like, to me, that if you're collecting $40 billion more than you thought, somebody is being overcharged.

And so we've submitted a plan to Congress to provide meaningful tax relief. Let me give you some of the principles of the plan. First, I don't believe in targeting tax cuts. I don't think the U.S. Congress ought to be able to pick and choose the winners in society. "You get the tax relief, and you don't get the tax relief." It makes sense that everybody who pays taxes, if we're going to have tax relief, ought to get tax relief. That's the fair way to do things.

We need to begin the process of making the code more simple. And a good place to start is to reduce the number of rates there are. So we shrink the rates from five to four and drop all rates. The Tax Code is very unfair to people at the bottom end of the economic ladder. If you're struggling to get ahead in America, say for example, you're a single mom, raising children, and you're at the $22,000-a-year range, for every additional dollar you earn, the way this code is structured today, you pay a higher marginal rate on that dollar than someone who's making over $200,000. As the lady who's struggling to get ahead, trying to put food on the table for her family, makes additional dollars overtime—if you're a waitress, for example, working late at night—that additional dollar is taxed at a

higher rate than someone making $200,000. That's incredibly unfair, and it's certainly not what America's about, as far as I'm concerned. America ought to be about rewarding hard work, not punishing hard work. And so we drop the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent and increase the child credit from $500 to $1,000 per child.

The code is not only unfair at penalizing people who live on the outskirts of poverty; the code also sends the wrong signal when it comes to marriage. And we have a marriage penalty in the Tax Code that we need to fix. And so my plan that I'm submitting to Congress does just that.

But I want to talk about two other aspects of the tax relief package that are very important and sometimes misunderstood. I strongly believe we need to drop the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent. I've heard all the rhetoric about what that means, and so have you. But overlooked in the political hyperbole that tends to take place in our process is the fact that dropping the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent serves as a stimulus to small-business growth in America.

The Treasury Department released a report earlier today on small-business owners who pay personal income taxes and small businesses which pay at the highest rate of 39.6. According to the Treasury Department, nationwide there are more than 17.4 million small-business owners and entrepreneurs who stand to benefit from dropping the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent.

The role of Government is not to create wealth. The role of Government is to create an environment in which the entrepreneurial person in America who works hard and dreams big can realize his or her dreams. That's the role of Government.

I've got three folks standing up here that will serve as vivid examples of small-business folks from respective States. And I want to explain the impact of what dropping the top rate means in terms of the number of people, number of small businesses, who will be affected. Again, I repeat for America to hear: Most small businesses don't pay corporate taxes; most small businesses are sole proprietors or Subchapter S's. And their businesses are subject to personal income tax rates.

Patty Nathe of the State of Florida represents a State where there is one million small businesses and entrepreneurs who will benefit when we drop the top rate. Dennis Fugo from Ohio—Denise Fugo, who happens to be head of the National Restaurant Association, represents a State that has more than 630,000 small-business owners and entrepreneurs who will benefit. And Brad Drake from the State of South Dakota, an entrepreneur and small-business owner, represents a State with 55,000 small-business owners and entrepreneurs in a State who will benefit from dropping the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent.

It is very important for Congress to hear from you. It is also important for Congress to understand the impact small businesses have on our economy and to always keep that in mind. If we want to have a strong economy and a strong America, it is important to understand that small businesses generate 51 percent of the private sector GDP and that small businesses provide 75 percent of the net new jobs in America.

The small-business owner is incredibly important to the future of this country. And this tax relief plan is aimed at encouraging capital formation and capital growth in the small-business sector of America. And the Congress must understand that and must hear from you all.

The tax relief plan will increase cashflow of small businesses, giving folks more resources to buy more equipment and, as importantly, hire more workers. This tax relief plan gives people a chance from both political parties to send a clear signal that we are allies here in Washington of the small-business owner, not adversaries; that we encourage small-business growth; that we understand the importance of the entrepreneur in the American economic sector.

And I hope as you all become involved in this process, that you help fight through the noise, the background chatter, the kind of political clutter that tends to fog the real issue. And the real issue is, how do we get money in the pockets of our entrepreneurs, after we meet basic obligations of Government, after we increase discretionary spending by 4 percent, and pay down taxes?

The fundamental debate is what to do. And the apologists, those who don't stand on the side of the entrepreneur, want to say, "Use every excuse in the business to keep your money in Washington." They want to grow the size of Government. I don't. I want to grow the size of the private sector by giving you your money back.

And there's another debate that's taking place that affects you directly. And it's about the death tax. I don't think it's fair to tax a person's assets twice. I don't think it's fair for the small-business owner or the farmer or the rancher to work their life so they can pass their asset or their business on to a relative or a family member and have it taxed twice, once when you make the income and secondly after you die. I hope—I hope—that you stand with us, not only to make sure that the tax relief plan is fair, staying with us to make sure that dropping that top rate—people hear what it does for the incredibly vital sector of America, the American economy, which is the small-business sector—but also stand with us in sending that message loud and clear, that we need to get rid of the death tax in the Tax Code.

I urge you to let your Senator know, or Senators know, what your opinion is. I believe you can have a big impact on how folks think up here. I certainly feel like we're making progress by reminding people of the practicalities of budgeting and the commonsense approach to what to do with your money.

But you need to let people know what they ought to be doing with your money, too. And a choice is—the choice is growing our economy or growing the Government. I just want to assure you that we've got ample money to meet our needs. And if we don't pass money back, I just know what's going to happen to it. It's going to be spent. [*Laughter*]

It's like the grandmother in Council Bluffs, Iowa, said during a speech. She said she has baked a lot of cookies in her day, and she's seen children and grandchildren come through her house. And every time she's left the cookies on the plate, they have been eaten. [*Laughter*] And that's how I view the budget process. [*Laughter*]

Finally, I want to urge you to be involved in your communities. I know you are in hiring people. But as entrepreneurs and concerned citizens, it's also important to be involved in your schools, to help fund and staff the programs that literally change America, one face at a time.

You see, the great strength of America are the people of our country, the dreamers and doers and people who can accomplish things. People not only figure out how to make a living by using their brain but also figure out how to make their neighborhoods better by following their hearts. I hope you sponsor mentoring programs, so that all children feel like somebody cares about them in our society. I hope you get involved with after-school programs that may be sponsored by the Boys and Girls Clubs of America. The greatness of the country really, really exists because Americans care about our future.

There is a role for Government, but I understand how limited it is. I oftentimes tell people I wish I could sign the law that says we'll love each other like we'd like to loved ourself. That's not the role of Government. But it is the role of the President to lift the spirit of the country and to call upon the best. And the best are sitting right here. And I urge you to go back to your community and make a difference in somebody's life.

God bless you all, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:35 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao, who introduced the President.

The President's Radio Address
March 17, 2001

Good morning. For several months, economic indicators have pointed toward a slowdown, and now many Americans are beginning to feel its impact in your lives. The stock market is causing worries; high energy prices are straining family budgets; and some American workers and small-business people have been directly affected by layoffs and slowing retail sales. We have been hearing too much troubling economic news. It is time for the United States Congress to give Americans some good economic news: tax relief for everyone who pays income taxes.

This would be good news for families struggling to pay off debt and to save for the future. It would be good news for small businesses that need customers with money to spend. And it would be good news for our broader economy, good news for economic growth and job creation and consumer confidence.

The House of Representatives has already passed a large part of my tax relief plan. Now it is up to the Senate. It is only common sense to give our economy a boost in a slowdown. Yet tax relief is more than common sense; it is a matter of principle. My tax relief plan is also a tax reform plan. It corrects some of the worst, most unfair abuses in our current tax system. And I would be recommending these changes in any economic circumstance.

On principle, our Tax Code should reward hard work and overtime by men and women struggling to enter the middle class. Right now they face some of the highest marginal rates in the Tax Code. So we lower those rates to encourage their dreams.

On principle, our Tax Code should honor family. That's why we double the per-child tax credit and reduce the marriage penalty.

On principle, no one in America should have to pay more than a third of their paycheck to the Federal Government. So we reduce tax rates for everyone in every bracket.

On principle, every family, every farmer, and small-business person should be free to pass on their life's work to those they love. So we abolish the death tax.

These are not Republican principles or Democratic principles; these are principles that are shared by Americans in both parties and Americans in no party. This is the reason my tax relief plan has so much momentum. Americans want our Tax Code to be reasonable and simple and fair. These are goals that unite our country, and these are goals that have shaped my plan.

The Senate should act quickly on my plan for two good reasons: First, tax relief is good news for our economy, which needs some good news. Second, my tax reform plan will treat everyone fairly.

If you agree with me, I hope you'll tell your Senator that you agree. Together we can help make our Nation more prosperous and our tax system more fair.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 1:06 p.m. on March 16 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on March 17. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 16

but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori of Japan and an Exchange With Reporters
March 19, 2001

President Bush. It's my honor to welcome the Prime Minister of our close friend to the Oval Office. Mr. Prime Minister, welcome.

This meeting is an important meeting because it gives us both a chance to confirm the importance of our relationship. We view Japan as a very strong friend and ally, and that's the way it's going to be during my administration. And we've got such a good friendship and such a strong alliance that we're able to overcome occasional problems that might arise. We can do so in the spirit of friendship.

So I'm honored that the Prime Minister is here. We're going to have a—we'll discuss a lot of issues: We'll discuss our economies; we'll discuss trade; we'll discuss our alliance and how best to work together to keep the peace. I'm looking forward to a very fruitful and important discussion.

Mr. Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Mori. I have spoken to President Bush over the phone three times, but I am delighted today that I am able to have a face-to-face meeting with the President. In today's meeting, as the President just said, I would like to reaffirm the strong alliance between Japan and the United States and would like to discuss a very—a broad range of issues, including various issues in international affairs, and would like to set out the fundamental direction in which the Japan-U.S. alliance should head in the 21st century.

I would like to explain the various measures which our Government has taken so that the Japanese economy will have a fully sustainable economic growth. And I'd like to express my strong determination to pursue necessary policies for that. I'd also like to express to the President my hope that United States will take appropriate macroeconomic policies to deal with the U.S. economy that is slowing down.

Bank of Japan's Zero-Interest-Rate Policy

[*At this point, a question was asked in Japanese, and a translation was not provided.*]

Prime Minister Mori. I, of course, will be explaining to the President the decision made by the Bank of Japan yesterday, and I sincerely hope that it will have—and I am certain that it will have a positive effect on our economy.

U.S. and Japanese Economies

Q. Mr. President, with both the Japanese and the American economies in such fragile states, could you explain how you see the interrelationship between the economies and what you'd like to see the Japanese Government do to address its problems and particularly in the financial sector?

President Bush. First, we've got to get our own economy growing the way I know it can. That's why I'm advocating tax relief and free trade regulatory relief. And I look forward to explaining to the Prime Minister that we do have a plan to give our economy a second wind. I'm very confident about our economy. I know it can beat expectations. I will explain that to him, as clearly as I can, about when our policies are in place, how optimistic I am about economic growth.

And secondly, I look forward to hearing Japan's view of reform, internal reform. I'm

confident that's going to be a large part of our discussions today.

The interrelationship between our two economies is important. When you combine our economies, we represent about 40 percent of the gross domestic products of all the nations added up. And that's a very important—and therefore, our economies are very important to the world. And the stronger we are, the more likely it is there will be prosperity in other parts of the world. And so this is going to be a very important part of our discussion.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:55 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. Prime Minister Mori spoke in Japanese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Joint Statement With Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori
March 19, 2001

President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori today reaffirmed the strength of the bilateral relationship between their two countries. The two leaders expressed their conviction that the U.S.-Japan relationship is rooted in friendship, mutual trust, and shared democratic values. They also concurred that these solid ties enable the two countries to deal with problems, such as the regrettable Ehime Maru accident. They noted that the U.S.-Japan alliance is the foundation of peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region. Agreeing that the U.S. presence remains vital to regional security, the leaders pledged to work together to further strengthen the alliance.

The two leaders, noting that the United States and Japan together account for roughly 40 percent of the world economy, reaffirmed the importance of working together to promote prosperity in their two countries and around the world. The leaders recognized the need to address the challenges facing their two economies. The Prime Minister reiterated his determination to continue pursuing appropriate economic policies and to promote vigorously structural and regulatory reform to revitalize the Japanese economy and strengthen the financial system, including through effectively addressing the issues of corporate debt and non-performing loans. The President reaffirmed the importance of taking appropriate policies to support sustainable growth in the United States, which will benefit both countries and the world economy. They agreed on the importance of promoting deregulation, restructuring, and foreign direct investment. They agreed to work together to seek new ways to enhance the U.S.-Japan dialogue to address global, regional, and bilateral economic and trade issues, and recognized that bringing views from outside the two governments into this effort would strengthen the bilateral relationship and improve economic performance in both countries. Both leaders also agreed to work together closely for the launch of a new WTO round this year.

President Bush and Prime Minister Mori recognized the growing threat from the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles. As part of a comprehensive strategy to meet such threats, they agreed on the importance of stepping up diplomatic efforts, including in the field of arms reduction. They also reaffirmed the need to take effective measures to address such threats, including defensive systems, strengthened proliferation controls, and counterproliferation measures. The two leaders noted with satisfaction that the United States and Japan are already conducting cooperative research on ballistic

missile defense technologies. They agreed on the importance of close consultations on missile defense among allies and with other interested parties.

The two leaders noted that uncertainty in the Asia-Pacific region necessitates close bilateral cooperation, including a dynamic approach to bilateral defense consultation and planning. The two leaders reaffirmed the need to continue to carry out commitments under the 1996 U.S.-Japan Joint Declaration on Security and related undertakings, such as the new Guidelines for U.S.-Japan Defense Cooperation and the SACO process, that strengthen the alliance, and they agreed to continue to work closely on issues related to Okinawa. The leaders also agreed that strategic dialogue will be an important step in defining how the alliance can best promote stability and address new challenges that may emerge. They pledged to coordinate closely on pressing regional issues, and reaffirmed the particular importance of maintaining close consultations and coordination regarding North Korea, both bilaterally and trilaterally with the Republic of Korea.

The President and Prime Minister recognized the need for the United States and Japan to continue cooperation on global issues, taking note of the important achievements this cooperation has produced thus far. Noting that their two countries are the world's largest aid donors, the leaders agreed to strengthen joint efforts to address the transnational challenges of the 21st century. The two leaders expressed their commitment to promoting United Nations Security Council reform with the goal of strengthening its effectiveness. In this context, they agreed to continue to work together to obtain for Japan a permanent seat on the Security Council.

The President accepted with gratitude the Prime Minister's invitation for an early visit to Japan.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Remarks to the United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
March 19, 2001

Well, thank you very much, Abel. I don't know what you said, but—[*laughter*]—it worked.

I want to thank you very much for being here. I appreciate Mitch and Margaret and Ruben and Marc to be here to talk to you all and brief you about what we're trying to do here in the administration. And thank you all for your interest.

Before I begin, I do want to say hello to Hector, who is the designated nominee to the Small Business Administration. And George Herrera, thank you very much, *Jorge.* for your—[*applause*]. And thank you all for what you do to make America a unique and wonderful place.

I don't think enough people in our country pay attention to the role of the small-business person, the incredible impact the Hispanic small-business person has on the country. I remember campaigning in California, and Hector said, "You know, you've got an amazing statistic. There are thousands of Hispanic-owned small businesses in our State." And I said, "Oh, really, by thousands, what do you mean?" He said, "Would you believe 600,000?" And I said, "I do," because this is what America is all about, the idea of somebody having a dream. It doesn't matter what your background is, where you're from, if you work hard and dream big, you can realize your dream.

And that's what good public policy is all about, too. It firmly recognizes that the role of Government is not to create wealth but an environment in which the entrepreneurial spirit can flourish. And I want to talk to you about that today in terms of the U.S. budget.

But first, I want to confirm our commitment to free trade in this administration. I believe free trade is an incredibly important part of making sure the environment is hospitable to the formation of small businesses. And trade with Mexico is an integral part of making sure that our hemisphere is safe, secure, and prosperous.

I had a chance to reiterate that face to face with Vicente Fox, who is—he's going to provide good, strong leadership for Mexico. And I told him that a strong Mexico is in our Nation's best interests. It's in our Nation's best interests that Mexico be prosperous and vibrant. And the best way to do so is for there to be free and fair trade between our countries. This is a message I hope the Congress hears.

Our hemisphere, by the way, is not going to be an afterthought for this administration. It's one of the most important parts of our foreign policy, will be to promote prosperity and peace and freedom throughout this hemisphere.

And so part of making sure the environment is hospitable to a capital formation and the entrepreneurial spirit is trade. But another part is to make sure the Federal Government does not squash opportunity by being—overspending taxpayer money.

It's important that we budget wisely. And I want to talk a little bit about our budget, and I want to thank you all for paying attention to the debate in the budget, because it directly affects your lives.

First, the fundamental question a lot of people ask is, "Are we spending enough money to meet the needs of the Government?" And the answer is: Yes, we are. The budget I submitted to Congress increases discretionary spending by 4 percent. Now, keep in mind, that's greater than the rate of inflation; it's greater than, generally, the pay raises that the people who are paying the bills have received. In other words, we're spending quite a bit of money. And that 4 percent, when you look at the budget in terms of trillions, is a lot of money. It's a lot of money.

It allows us to set priorities. I mean, I have set priorities, which allows us to be fiscally responsible with your money. Education is a priority. Funding the defense budget, making sure our folks are paid better, who wear the uniform, is a priority. Medicare and Social Security are priorities. We doubled the Medicare budget, and we say to the Congress that the payroll taxes for Social Security will be only spent on Social Security. We've set priorities.

We've made it clear that education is important. We made it clear that health care is important. We made it clear that retirement systems are important, and we grew the discretionary spending by 4 percent. Now, the reason there is some hollering up here is because last year they grew the discretionary budget by 8 percent. It's unbelievable how much money they spent on the way out of town. And we're saying, let's be realistic with the people's money.

On the Medicare and Social Security issue, these are more than just spending issues. These two are issues that are important for the future of the country and require the Congress and the President working together. Today the trustees issued their reports on the financial status of Social Security and Medicare. These nonpartisan reports underline and add an exclamation point to the need to reform and strengthen both.

Social Security and Medicare are vital programs, and they need major reforms. We must act and do so courageously. And that's part of my message to the Congress. These are issues that we need to work together on. Today's reports show health care costs are rising at a faster rate than was

previously estimated. By 2016, expenses in both Medicare Part A and Social Security will be greater than the payroll taxes coming in to support them, and 2016 isn't very far down the road.

The financing deficit for the entire Medicare program, including Parts A and B, is larger than ever. We must respond and act with courage to keep Medicare and Social Security benefits secure. In the words of the Board of Trustees, both Social Security and Medicare need to be reformed and strengthened at the earliest opportunity, and that's what I'm going to ask both Republicans and Democrats to do on the Hill.

It's one thing to double the Medicare budget over 10 years. We need to work together to make sure the Medicare system responds to the needs of the elderly, to give elderly more choices, including prescription drug benefits, so we can say—firmly say, we're going to keep our promises to the elderly in America.

This requires a sense that—of urgency. We have only so many years to get the systems back on track. It's time to quit the posturing and time to reform the systems. And I'm prepared to spend the political capital, along with both Republicans and Democrats, to do so.

We have long-term commitments, and we'll keep them. And Medicare and Social Security have long-term problems that we're going to solve. Part of the Social Security reform must include allowing younger workers the option to take some of their own money and put it in the private markets, under safe conditions. In order to make sure that there is a Social Security system around tomorrow, we've got to get a better rate of return on the money in the Social Security Trust. And that means trusting people with their own money to make wise decisions as to how to get a better rate of return than the 2 percent in the Social Security Trust. I fully recognize that reforming Medicare and Social Security are going to require a new way of thinking in Washington, but it's time for there to be a new way of thinking in Washington.

There is also a lot of talk about paying down debt, as I'm sure the OMB Director will tell you. We pay down a lot of debt. We pay down $2 trillion of debt over the next 10 years. And that's important. It improves the balance sheet of our Government. But I want to remind the folks that there is more than just Government debt in our society. There is credit card debt that affects the ability of many of our citizens to be able to save, for example. And when you couple high energy prices with credit card debt, there are some of our families in this country beginning to strain. And it seems wise and commonsense policy to meet our needs at the Federal level, pay down debt, and always remember, if we have any money left over, whose it is to begin with.

And so one of the things I'm asking Congress to do is to be fiscally sane with the people's money, pay down debt, set aside some money for contingencies, but with that money left over, not try to spend it on bigger Government but let it be spent on bigger family—on family needs. It's to pass it back to the people who paid the bills.

That's the fundamental debate taking place here in Washington. It's a debate as to whether or not, after we meet needs, we grow the Government or we trust people with their own money. And this is an issue of trust, and I want your help on the issue.

As I've said, it directly affects you, and let me explain how, besides the fact that if you pay taxes, you're going to get tax relief. And that's one of the principles of this debate. There are some in Washington who would like to have what they call targeted tax relief. It means the Federal Government gets to pick and choose the winners and losers. That's not the role of Government. The role of Government, in my judgment, is to be fair and even-handed, and it says if you pay taxes, you get relief.

That's what the role of Government ought to be.

A lot of times in the rhetoric, people forget the facts. And the facts are that thousands of small businesses, Hispanically owned or otherwise, pay taxes at the highest marginal rate, because most small businesses are not incorporated. They're sole proprietorships, or they're Subchapter S's, and they're subject to the 39.6 percent income tax rate. And so when you hear us talking about dropping the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent, I hope Americans understand the positive effect this will have on the small-business communities.

It is the message that I hope Congress joins me on in saying we understand how small businesses grow, and they grow by being able to have more cashflow to reinvest in their own business. The small-business person is an integral part of new employment in America. But more importantly, the small-business owner represents the great dreams of Americans. And the role of Government is to create an environment that encourages Hispanic-owned businesses, women-owned businesses, anybody-kind-of-owned businesses. And the reduction of the top rate sends a clear message that we appreciate what you're doing, and we want you to continue to do it, and we want you to have some of your own money so that you can expand your businesses and more likely realize your dreams. That's what tax relief is all about.

We have met the needs of Government. We have paid down debt. We've set aside money for health care. We have set aside the money—the people's money for Social Security. And what we're saying is, after we've grown the budget by 4 percent, let's remember who paid the bills and remember what drives America, and it's the small-business community and the entrepreneur.

And so I'd like your help. I'd like your help by—if you contact your Senators, you might just put a word in for your own self. [*Laughter*]

And there's one other aspect of tax reform that I think is important. There's a lot of it, obviously: We drop all rates; we simplify the code; we increase the child credit from $500 to $1,000 per child, which is a very positive addition to the code because it makes the code more fair for people struggling to get ahead; we do something on the marriage penalty; and as importantly to you, we eliminate the death tax.

The death tax is a tax that causes the small-business owner to pay taxes twice, once as you build your business and then when you pass it on to your heirs. And it seems like to me that part of the American experience ought to make it easy for a mom or a dad, once he or she builds up his or her business, to pass it on to a son or a daughter. That's what America is all about; it's the ability to transfer.

And so I appreciate so very much you all being here to lend your voice—listen to what we have to say and to lend your voice for reason and common sense in Washington, DC. All the rhetoric sometimes tries to obscure reality, and there's a lot of name-calling at times and trying to frighten people one way or the other. But I think when people take an objective look at what we're trying to do, they'll realize this is a commonsense approach to your money, and it recognizes the great strength of America lies not here in Washington but in the hearts and souls of our folks, people who are willing to work hard, take risk, dream big, and realize the great American experience—but not only realize it but enrich it, to make it so much stronger and so much better.

I used to tell the folks in my great State of Texas, I said, I welcome the Hispanic influence in our State. It makes Texas a richer place, a stronger place, a place that I'm proud to call home. And that's the way I feel about America, too.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:15 p.m. in Presidential Hall in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Associate Director of Public Liaison Abel Guerra; Office of Management and Budget Director Mitchell Daniels, Jr.; Domestic Policy Adviser Margaret LaMontagne; Intergovernmental Affairs Director Ruben Barrales; National Economic Council Deputy Director D. Marc Summerlin; Small Business Administrator-designate Hector V. Barretto; George Herrera, president and chief executive officer, U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce; and President Vicente Fox of Mexico.

Remarks Following a Meeting With the National Energy Policy Development Group and an Exchange With Reporters
March 19, 2001

The President. Thank you all for coming. I appreciate the Vice President calling this meeting. It's a meeting to bring me up to speed as to what the committee that we put together to look at the energy situation in America—where we are. His group is making good progress. Obviously, this is an issue that this administration takes very seriously. We've assembled senior members of the Cabinet to analyze the situation and to come up with recommendations.

It is clear from first analysis that demand for energy in the United States is increasing, much more so than production is. And as a result, we're finding in certain parts of the country that we're short on energy. And this administration is concerned about it, and we will make a recommendation to the country as to how to proceed.

But one thing is for certain, there are no short-term fixes; that the solution for our energy shortage requires long-term thinking and a plan that we'll implement that will take time to bring to fruition. It not only includes good conservation but, as well, exploration for oil and gas and coal, development of energy sources that exist within our 50 States.

It also requires good foreign policy, and that's—in order to increase the amount of energy available for American consumers, we have to work closely with our neighbors to the north and the south, which we will do.

And so, Mr. Vice President, thank you. You've done good work, and we look forward to reporting to the Nation when your report is final.

OPEC Production Limits

Q. Mr. President, during the campaign you said that you'd be able to work with our allies in OPEC to get them to restrain the prices. Given what happened over the weekend, what went wrong? Do you consider it a direct rebuff to your administration's entreaty? And what are you going to do about it?

The President. The OPEC nations are responding to decreased demand. World demand, they think, is going to decrease, and therefore, they've responded with a million-barrel cut.

The piece of good news in their decision was that the Saudi minister made it clear that he and his friends would not allow the price of oil, crude oil, to exceed $28 a barrel. That's very comforting to the American consumer, and I appreciate that gesture. I thought that was a very strong statement of understanding, that high prices of crude oil will affect our economy.

Having said that, it's important for American consumers to understand that if we have a price spike in refined product, it's

not going to be because of the price of crude oil being at $25 or $26 a barrel. It's going to be because we don't have enough capacity, refining capacity; we're not generating enough product. And that's another issue that we'll be dealing with, is how to make sure we can get refined product to our consumers.

Q. So this cut in production won't have an impact on gasoline prices this summer?

The President. We don't think so. We think that the major—the major impact on gasoline prices, if they go up, is a result of not generating enough supply—enough refined product to meet the demand of U.S. drivers. And we haven't built a refinery in 25 years in America. We're not generating enough gasoline to meet demands. It's the same as natural gas. We're not exploring for enough natural gas to meet demand; we're not building enough power generating plants to meet demand; and we're beginning to pay the price for it.

America has got to understand that energy is an issue, and we're going to deal with it.

Strategic Petroleum Reserve

Q. Mr. President, you say there are no short-term fixes, but are you considering or will you consider short-term options in case there are shortages this summer, such as tapping into the Strategic Petroleum Reserve?

The President. We've been through that before. The Strategic Petroleum Reserve is meant for a national emergency when it comes to war. There are some things we can do. We can work with California, at the Governor's request, to expedite permitting. And Administrator Whitman has done an excellent job of working with California to encourage and enable California to more speedily build plants.

The energy crunch we're in is a supply-and-demand issue. And we need to reduce demand and increase supply. The best public policy is to understand that, and that's what we're going to do.

Hemispheric Energy Resources

Q. Mr. President, what about tapping Mexico's oil reserves? Have you thought about what that——

The President. Well, we had a good discussion. I had a very good discussion with Vicente Fox. And Secretary Abraham had a very good discussion with his counterpart from Mexico. Mexico has to make the decision as to whether or not they will be willing to allow foreign capital to explore for oil and gas in their country. That's the Mexican decision to make.

I encouraged the President to begin allowing foreign capital to explore for natural gas in Mexico. It would be to our benefit. Gas is hemispheric. An mcf of gas found in Mexico is beneficial for the United States and Canada, even though it's found in Mexico. And the Vice President and I have had discussions with Prime Minister Chretien about exploration for natural gas.

A good energy policy is one that understands we've got energy in our hemisphere and how best to explore for it and transport it to markets. So you bet, we've continued discussions with Mexico, as well as Canada.

Meeting With Black Ministers

Q. The Black religious leaders that you met with this afternoon, they emerged from the meeting and were very highly complimentary of you and your faith-based plan. Were you encouraged about the meeting that you had with them as much as they were? And how crucial is their support to your Faith-Based Initiative?

The President. Well, the Black ministers with whom I met are very crucial for helping change the neighborhoods and communities in which they live. Many of those preachers are bishops over churches that have got great programs and change people's hearts and provide hope in neighborhoods where there is no hope. So I view them not as agents of politics; I view them as agents of change. And they are supportive of our efforts to empower people to be able to make choices as to where

to find services and help. And I am supportive of their efforts to provide help where help is needed. And I really appreciate them coming, so I was very encouraged by the meeting.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:50 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources Ali Ibrahim Naimi of Saudi Arabia; Gov. Gray Davis of California; President Vicente Fox and Secretary of Energy Ernesto Martens Rebolledo of Mexico; and Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to Women Business Leaders
March 20, 2001

Thank you. Thank you for being here. Please sit down. First Lady—it's got a nice ring to it. [*Laughter*] I'm proud of Laura. She is—she makes this White House special for me. She is—brings a lot of perspective to our household. She kind of reminds the President where he came from—[*laughter*]—and always makes sure my tie lies straight. But I'm proud of the job she's doing for America, and she's going to be a great First Lady.

And I am proud of the ladies behind me, as well. We've put together a great Cabinet. They're not afraid to speak their mind. They're smart. They're capable, and they represent America. And they're good; they're really good. We've got a great Cabinet, and these good folks up here make a big difference.

And I've got a great staff, as well. And I appreciate Margaret LaMontagne being here. Margaret's the Domestic Policy Adviser to the President. And I've known her a long time. She's plenty capable, and she's spending a lot of time on education, which is one of the subjects I want to discuss with you today. And I appreciate you, Margaret.

I also want to thank Bonnie for your hard work and for putting this on. And I want to thank you all for coming. I know you all are going to Capitol Hill today. I hope you help us deliver a couple of messages. One is going to be on education. Another is on commonsense budgeting and tax relief, and why it's important to all people, particularly those who have decided to invest capital in the private sector. And I want to explain why this tax relief package will spur economic activity and entrepreneurship in America.

First, let me talk about education. I said it was my priority in the campaign. It is our priority in this administration. An educated child is one much more likely to realize his or her dreams. And we've got to do a better job of making sure every child—I mean every child—is educated.

One of things about this administration I think people will find is that we are consistent. We set out a set of principles and stand by them, that we don't try to figure out polls and focus groups—we don't use polls and focus groups to figure out where to head.

And there are some solid principles involved with our education plan. One of them is setting high standards and high expectations for every child. We believe if you have low expectations, you get lousy results. If you believe in the best in every single child and set high expectations, good folks will follow.

Secondly, we believe strongly in local control of schools. We believe in aligning authority and responsibility at the local level. Many of you, as you run your own businesses, know full well that when you

separate accountability and responsibility or responsibility and authority, it creates an excuse for failure. "Oh, I would have done it a different way." And so we align authority and responsibility where it belongs, at the local level. And I hope you help Congress understand the importance to pass power out of Washington, to provide flexibility at the State and local level.

Thirdly, we believe strongly in a results-oriented system. A lot of times in education, people focus on process. We think the world needs to start focusing on results. People need to start asking the question, "What do you know," not "How old are you?" In a world that asks the question, "How old are you," oftentimes people just get shuffled through regardless of what they know. "If you're 12, you're here. If you're 14, you're here," and "Let's just move you through." And those of us who have been involved in public education know full well who gets left behind: children whose parents don't speak English as a first language, for example; inner-city kids. It's so much easier to quit on children. We strongly believe that by insisting upon results, it will begin to change the mentality of public schools all across America.

And so, one, we've asked for more money for our budgets. We've increased education spending quite significantly. And we've said, in return, however, we expect States and local jurisdictions to measure, to show us whether or not students can read and write and add and subtract, to focus on every child since every child matters. We've got to end the process-oriented world of public schools.

And we firmly believe that through accountability not only can we diagnose and solve problems, but accountability serves as a catalyst for reforms. It's the accountability system that encourages local folks to say, "Wait a minute, the status quo is unacceptable. Let's try something else." It's strong accountability measures that will foster charter school movements, or public school choice movements, if necessary, to make sure not one single child gets left behind.

So we've got an education vision that says, there will be more money in the system, but let's make sure that we have high standards, local control of schools, and strong results-oriented systems. I firmly believe that when we get the system right, the results will begin to improve dramatically. And we've targeted some money. We've set aside $5 billion for a national reading agenda. It's not the Federal Government telling you what to do but the Federal Government saying, "Here's money available for K-through-two diagnostic tools, so that we can determine early in a child's career where that child may need extra help."

There's teacher training money. One of the failures—one of the deficiencies—I wouldn't call it a failure—but deficiencies in the system is that oftentimes our teachers are not given a—taught how to teach a curriculum that works. And we need to retrain teachers. So we've got money available to do that.

We've got intense—money available for after school programs or schools within schools to help young readers get up to speed early. We've set a goal that all children ought to be reading by third grade. And I look forward to working with the Congress, to make sure the program gets funded, and our Secretary of Education, to make sure it gets implemented in such a way as we don't erode local responsibility of schools.

So that's the education plan. Oh, there's a lot of discussion you'll hear about, "We can't measure. It's too much Government to measure." I just disagree. If we're spending money, we ought to get results for the money. But this isn't a national test; this is a test where local folks will design the test. The great State of Pennsylvania can design its own test. Texas designs its own test. But there needs to be a sense of accountability in the system. And then you'll hear people say, "It's racist to test." It's

racist not to test. It's racist not to hold people accountable. Those who say it's racist to test must assume that certain children can't learn. We don't believe that. We believe all children can learn.

So the principles involved in the education reform are sound and solid, and they reflect what I hope you all agree with, that there is a better way. We need to challenge the status quo when we find our children trapped in schools that are just not going to teach and won't change.

Secondly, I want to talk about the budget. There's a lot of talk about the budget, of course. And I made some people nervous up here, to be frank with you, because I've decided that instead of increasing discretionary spending by 8 percent on an annual basis, which is a lot when you're talking in terms of trillions, that we'll have spending increase at 4 percent, greater than the rate of inflation, larger than most people's pay raises last year. And it's caused some consternation, because the temptation is for people to appropriate when money's available.

I was in Council Bluffs, Iowa, and a grandmother stood up and she said, "You know," she said, "I've baked a lot of cookies in my day, and I've had children and grandchildren go through the house. And every time I leave them on the table, they get eaten." And that's kind of what happens to Federal taxpayers' money.

So I've presented a realistic budget to the Congress. It says, like many of you all do in your businesses, set priorities. I realize that—we've got to realize it's important to set priorities. Education is a priority. The military is a priority of mine, starting with making sure people get better pay and better housing.

Now, we have stepped back from some of the big appropriation requests, because I want Don Rumsfeld to take a full look at the military, to make sure military spending meets a military strategy that will help us keep the peace in the out years. And it's important to do that. It's important to make sure taxpayers' money is well spent and well focused on all areas of concern. And the Defense budget requires a good scrubbing and a good looking-at. And that's exactly what this administration is doing.

But in the meantime, we need to send a clear signal to the men and women who wear the troop—who wear the uniform, the troops who wear the uniforms: We appreciate what you do on behalf of America, so we're going to pay you a little better and house you better and have a mission that is more focused, which is to be able to fight and win war and, therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place.

We've got money in the budget for Medicare. Our Medicare budget doubles over the next 10 years. And that's part of what's needed, but also—but we also need to make sure the system is modern, that it meets the needs of our seniors, it gives seniors a variety of options from which to choose, and all the options should include prescription drugs. So there's money in the budget for Medicare. That's a doubling.

And we set aside all the money for Social Security for only one thing, and that is Social Security. Take all the payroll taxes and make sure it's only spent on Social Security, and by the way, its system needs to be reformed, as well. One of the major components of reform is to allow younger workers to take some of their own money and put it in safe and secure market-oriented investment vehicles which will yield a greater rate of return than the paltry 2 percent our money now gets in the Social Security Trust today.

And we pay down $2 trillion worth of debt in our budget. Somebody said, "Why don't you take all the excess money and pay down debt?" Well, first of all, excess money tends to be spent on bigger baselines of Government. And—but the 2 trillion is all that's retiring over the next 10 years—all that's to be retired over the next 10 years. And it doesn't make any sense to pay a premium to prepay debt, and so

we're paying down all the debt that's available.

We set aside money for contingencies. And I know this is getting to be quite a long laundry list, but I'm trying to make a point that you all can help me make, is that we've increased discretionary spending by 4 percent; we pay down debt; we protect Social Security; we set aside one trillion over 10 years for contingencies; and there is still money left over. And that's where the fundamental debate comes in Washington, DC. There are those who want to increase the size and scope of the Federal Government. I believe we need to remember who paid the money in the first place, and I believe we need to pass it back.

Now, we drop all rates and simplify the code, drop the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent. We increase the child credit from 500 to 1,000, and the purpose of that is to make sure that those who work hard to get into the middle class are more likely to succeed. The Tax Code today penalizes people in the outskirts of poverty.

The marginal rate for folks coming from—a single mom—the example I like to use is a single mom making $22,000 a year who is struggling to get ahead and trying to raise her two children, which I also happen to believe is the toughest job in America. For every additional dollar she earns above the 22,000, she pays a higher marginal rate than someone making 200,000. And that's just not fair. And so we address the inequity in the Tax Code by dropping the bottom rate and increasing the child credit.

And we also drop the top rate, of course, from 39.6 to 33. If you pay taxes, you ought to get relief. Everybody who—but everybody benefits, I'm convinced, when the top rate drops because of the effect it will have on the entrepreneurial class in America. What the Congress needs to hear is that most small businesses are unincorporated businesses, sole proprietorships. Many are Subchapter S corps, who pay at the highest marginal rate. And when you drop the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent, you encourage the growth of small businesses, whether they be women-owned small businesses or any other small businesses.

People like to deflect the debate. They like to turn it into a class warfare debate. And you all can help by explaining clearly to people that reducing the top rate will help with job creation and capital formation and, as importantly, will help highlight the American Dream. And that is, you can own your own business, that ownership is not limited to just a few.

And we're going to do something on the marriage penalty. And we need to eliminate the death tax. This is a realistic plan with the people's money. It's a plan that meets needs. Admittedly, it doesn't grow the budget the way people are used to in Washington. But it's time to change that attitude about how prolific we're going to be with the people's money. There needs to be a focus and a strategy and a discipline.

It seems like, at times, people forgot whose money it is we're dealing with up here. It's not the Government's money. The rhetoric sounds like, "Oh, we're going to"—it's Government's money. But the money is here in Washington because of the hard work of people—people working hard, people who care. The cashflow coming into the Treasury of the United States is exceeding expectations, even though we're in an economic slowdown, which says to me, somebody is being overcharged. [*Laughter*] And I know who it is.

And so that's what the debate is all about. And I'd like your help. You can influence Members of Congress, and people listen to you. And so I hope you take folks aside and say, "Be realistic about our money. Let's don't balloon the size of the Federal Government." And let's also remember that by giving people their money back, it will help provide a second wind for our economy.

Many of you know better than me that our economy is slowing down, and we've got some issues with which we'll deal. Yesterday the Vice President brought to me an interim report on energy. We've got a problem with energy in America. Our demand is increasing, but our supplies aren't. And it doesn't take much economics to figure out what will happen.

And we're going to do something about it. This is going to be a very practical administration. We will view problems, analyze them, and deal with them. We'll be as upfront as we can with the American people. We'll explain when we can get something done quickly, and we'll explain when we can't get something done quickly. And we're not going to shirk from the problems with which we're confronted. And one of the problems is an energy crisis.

Another problem is a slowing economy, and we're going to deal with it. We'll deal with it in a forthright way. And part of it is good fiscal policy, which means when we give people their money back, it should serve as a stimulus to economic growth.

So this is a plan that not only brings fiscal discipline to the budgeting process; it's a plan that sets priorities. But it's also a plan that remembers how America grows, and it grows through entrepreneurship and the creation of small businesses and providing capital in the private sector for the expansion of jobs and the purchase of equipment. And that's what the plan is.

And I'd like your help. I'd like your help to sell it on the Hill. Two things I hope that you notice when you go up there is that I believe the country is beginning—or the Capitol is beginning to develop a culture of respect.

I want the Members—I fully recognize not everybody is going to agree with me, or us, and I respect that. I do. I may not agree with it, but I respect it. One of my jobs is to change the tone of Washington. Oh, occasionally, there's the voice out there that sounds a little disgruntled. But that's okay. That's part of a democracy. But our administration, or at least the people in my administration, will treat people with respect.

I respect those who don't agree with me on every single issue. I expect there not to be unanimity. And I believe by treating people respectfully, it is possible to do some positive things. This is a Congress that is beginning to get a sense of accomplishment. There is a culture of accomplishment in Washington. There's a bankruptcy bill that's working its way through the House and the Senate. There's an ergonomics—change in ergonomics regulations that I believe is positive, and I intend to sign today. There are some positive developments. Things are getting done.

And that's important. And that will be a little change from the way people have viewed Washington in the past. Washington seemed to be a place of bitterness and acrimony, and it doesn't have to be that way. It's important to change it not only to get good public policy done, but it's important to change the tone of Washington so that when people look at our Nation's Capital they understand that public service can be noble and positive—just like these ladies up here understand.

And our job is bigger than just legislation. Our job is to set a good tone, a tone of respect, a tone of accomplishment for the Nation. And that's exactly what we're going to do. And I want to thank you all for being here to help us get it done.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:50 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel and an Exchange With Reporters
March 20, 2001

President Bush. It's my honor to welcome the Prime Minister of our close friend and ally to the Oval Office. Mr. Prime Minister, welcome.

We've just had a very frank and good discussion. Both of us reconfirmed our friendship, both talked about how best to keep the peace.

I assured the Prime Minister my administration will work hard to lay the foundation of peace in the Middle—work with our nations in the Middle East, give peace a chance. Secondly, I told him that our Nation will not try to force peace, that we will facilitate peace, and that we will work with those responsible for peace.

The Prime Minister and I had met before. I took a tour of the West Bank by helicopter, and he was the guide. It was a pretty interesting—it was a really interesting day for me. He's got a marvelous sense of history, and I learned a lot about our friend by touring the West Bank by chopper with you, Mr. Prime Minister.

You didn't think you were going to be the Prime Minister, and you probably darn sure didn't think I was going to be the President. But here we are, and we've got great responsibilities to work together, and I look forward to doing so.

Welcome, Mr. Prime Minister. Glad you're here.

Prime Minister Sharon. Thank you. I would like to thank you, President Bush, for inviting me to the White House. We've had a very constructive and frank discussion of strategic issues that are of the interest of the United States and Israel. And we discussed the peace process, what can be achieved, and how. We are, in Israel, we are all committed to peace. As one who saw in the past all the horrors of wars, I believe I understand the import of peace. And in Israel, all of us are committed.

But of course, the first thing and the most important one is to bring security to the citizens of Israel. That was the commitment that I took upon myself, Mr. President, and that is the first thing that we have to accomplish. Once we reach security, and it will be calm in the Middle East, I believe that we will start with our negotiations to reach a peace agreement.

We shared issues of common interest, and I think it was a very good conversation, a very frank one, and I think that we can look forward—can look ahead, how to achieve our common goals in the Middle East, together with deep cooperation and coordination.

And I would like you for your friendship to Israel. We have friends here, and you have friends there in Israel, which is a democratic country, a stable democracy which appreciate the values of democratic life. I'm sure that we can do many things together. And I would like to thank you for the cooperation of your government, of your own, for our future interests in the Middle East.

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

Jerusalem

Q. Mr. President, the Prime Minister last night expressed his faith in Jerusalem as Israel's eternal, undivided capital, under Israel sovereignty. Mindful of your campaign statements, how do you feel about this statement? Is that something that has U.S. support?

President Bush. Well, the status of Israel, I mean, the status of Jerusalem will be ultimately determined by the interested parties. During the campaign, I said we'll begin the process of moving our Embassy to Jerusalem.

National Economy

Q. Mr. President, yesterday you said that you were very confident about the U.S. economy. Today you said that it's slowing down. Which is it? Are you trying to have it both ways?

President Bush. I was talking about the long-term health of our economy is going to be very strong. And that's in Israel's interest, that our economy be strong. We've got some problems, some short-term problems, and if Congress were to act quickly on my tax stimulus package, it would make our recovery quicker.

Q. Is there any reason to believe that it will help in the short term?

President Bush. Oh, I think it will, and I think good fiscal policy and good monetary policy, good trade policy will help our economy. And we need an energy policy, too. But I hope the Congress acts quickly on a stimulus package that will improve our economy. People have got to know that I have got great faith in the American economy.

Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat

Q. Mr. President, do you accept the idea not to invite Yasser Arafat, or are you going to invite him and meet with him here?

President Bush. Well, one of the things that the Prime Minister and I talked about is our engagement in the Middle East. I will do everything we can to help calm nerves, to encourage there to be dialog in a peaceful way. I haven't made up my plans on who I'm going to meet with yet. I do have some plans in place. I'm looking forward to meeting the King of Jordan, for example.

But one of the things that I will do is use whatever persuasive powers I have to create an environment in which peace can flourish. I've got great confidence in the Prime Minister, and so do the Israeli people. He got 66 percent of the vote. He did a little better at the polls than I did. [*Laughter*] You know what I mean, Mr. Prime Minister.

Future Middle East Negotiations

Q. Prime Minister Sharon, did you manage to convince the President Bush that you will not negotiate under fire? Do you think that this message is clear, and do you think that President Bush agrees with you about this issue?

Prime Minister Sharon. I didn't have to talk to President Bush about that. I think what I understand the policy of this great democracy, the United States, is that one should not surrender to terror and pressure and violence. And therefore, I don't have to work too hard on this thing. I even didn't try.

But I understand, and I believe that they do, and I appreciate that respect that—to that approach that one should never surrender to terror and that the free world should struggle against terror, local, regional, and international terror. And I'm sure that the United States leads such a struggle, and we are a partner in the struggle. I think that is in the interest of every democratic state, because in order to keep stability—and I'm a great supporter of the President's policy of keeping stability in the Middle East—the main danger to stability is terror. And that, I believe, will be—should be the common goal of every democratic country in the free world.

Q. Do you think that Arafat is the danger for the stability in the Middle East, Mr. Sharon?

Prime Minister Sharon. I don't think that I have to add about Arafat. Everyone knows what are the steps of terror and who is behind the steps. I don't think I have to add anything about that. It's clear.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to King Abdullah II of Jordan. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to Central Intelligence Agency Employees in Langley, Virginia
March 20, 2001

Thank you, all. I learned that move from my mother. [*Laughter*]

Thank you very much, George. I appreciate your kind introduction. I also want to thank you for agreeing to continue to serve as the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. You've done really good work here. The people that work here appreciate it, and I appreciate it, as well.

I also wanted to visit early in my administration to tell you all how much I value your work. The CIA and all the members of our intelligence community make a vital contribution to our Nation's security. I know this firsthand; I'm your customer. [*Laughter*] I see your product every morning at 8 o'clock sharp, and it's always first-rate.

I appreciate the work that goes into the briefing. I realize that the information inside it contains—represents the work of thousands of dedicated and daring men and women, at home and abroad. It is truly an honor to be among you and to be in this building.

I've flown into an airport once called George Bush. [*Laughter*] But I've never been in a Center like this. [*Laughter*] Seeing that sign on the way in, as you can imagine, made me feel really proud. But I was also struck by the contrast between today's world and the world as it looked 25 years ago, when my dad was the DCI.

To say that a lot has changed is an understatement. Back then, America faced an overarching threat, and everything we did, from strategy to resource allocation, was oriented to defending against that threat. Today, that single threat has been replaced by new and different threats, sometimes hard to define and defend against, threats such as terrorism, information warfare, the spread of weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them. Back then, freedom was in peril. Today, freedom is taking root in more and more lands around the world.

In retrospect, the world of 1976 looks staid and static compared to the revolutions of change that characterize our times. But what hasn't changed, what isn't different is the fact that sound intelligence is still critically important to America's national security. The challenges are new, but we still need your work to help us meet them. The opportunities are new, but we need your help to take advantage of them. But perhaps most of all, in a world where change, itself, seems to be the only constant, we need your help to anticipate change and to shape it in a way that favors freedom.

Yours is a mission of service and sacrifice in a world of great uncertainty and risk. America's commitments and responsibilities span the world and every time zone. Every day you help us meet those responsibilities with your quiet excellence. And nothing speaks louder to your legacy of service and sacrifice than the 77 stars on the wall behind me.

The American people aren't told much about your labors. In fact, you might be the only Federal agency where not making the newspapers or network news qualifies as good news. [*Laughter*] This is by necessity. But you need to know your President knows about your fine contributions to our Nation's security. And you also need to know that Americans are proud of you and the vital work that each of you does for your country. The operations officers, the analysts, the scientists, the technical experts, the intelligence officers who work for other agencies—each of you is important to the cause of freedom. And for that I say, God bless you, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:25 p.m. in the original headquarters building lobby at the George Bush Center for Intelligence.

Exchange With Reporters at the George Bush Center for Intelligence in Langley
March 20, 2001

Visit to the Central Intelligence Agency

Q. Good briefing, Mr. President?

The President. It was really interesting. Our Nation is fortunate to have so many dedicated men and women serve the country, and a lot of really good folks who work here. They've got one thing in mind, and that is how to serve America, how to provide the best information possible so that we can live in a peaceful world.

There are a lot of people in this world that really resent our country and resent what we stand for. The good folks in this building are doing everything they can to provide enough information for us to be able to protect our way of life and protect our people. And I'm really touched by being here. And I'm so grateful for the hospitality, Mr. Director.

Situation in Macedonia

Q. Mr. President, a quick question on Macedonia. What should the United States do about the fighting that is taking place?

The President. Well, we're going to work with our allies to bring peace to that region. We're very much involved through the NATO process, and we'll work with the Macedonian Government to help Macedonia protect its own borders.

Q. Should the U.S. be giving the Macedonian military assistance?

The President. We'll work with NATO to develop a strategy that will help Macedonia protect herself.

NOTE: The exchange began at 6:26 p.m. at CIA headquarters. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Statement on Signing Legislation To Repeal Federal Ergonomics Regulations
March 20, 2001

Today I have signed into law S.J. Res. 6, a measure that repeals an unduly burdensome and overly broad regulation dealing with ergonomics. This is the first time the Congressional Review Act has been put to use. This resolution is a good and proper use of the Act because the different branches of our Government need to be held accountable.

There needs to be a balance between and an understanding of the costs and benefits associated with Federal regulations. In this instance, though, in exchange for uncertain benefits, the ergonomics rule would have cost both large and small employers billions of dollars and presented employers with overwhelming compliance challenges. Also, the rule would have applied a bureaucratic one-size-fits-all solution to a broad range of employers and workers—not good government at work.

The safety and health of our Nation's workforce is a priority for my Administration. Together we will pursue a comprehensive approach to ergonomics that addresses the concerns surrounding the ergonomics rule repealed today. We will work with the Congress, the business community, and our Nation's workers to address this important issue.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
March 20, 2001.

NOTE: S.J. Res. 6, approved March 20, was assigned Public Law No. 107–5.

Letter to Governor Angus S. King, Jr., on Disaster Assistance to Maine
March 20, 2001

Dear Governor King:

As requested, I have declared an emergency under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 USC 5121 (Stafford Act), for the State of Maine due to the emergency conditions resulting from record/near record snow on March 5–7, 2001. I have authorized Federal relief and recovery assistance in the affected area.

Emergency protective measures (Category B) under the Public Assistance program to save lives, protect public health and safety, and property will be provided. This emergency assistance will be provided for a period of 48 hours. Consistent with the requirement that Federal assistance be supplemental, any Federal funds provided under the Stafford Act for Public Assistance will be limited to 75 percent of the total eligible costs in the designated areas.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will coordinate Federal assistance efforts and designate specific areas eligible for such assistance. The Federal Coordinating Officer will be Mr. David Rodham of FEMA. He will consult with you and assist in the execution of the FEMA-State Disaster Assistance Agreement governing the expenditure of Federal funds.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 21.

Remarks at the American College of Cardiology Convention in Orlando, Florida
March 21, 2001

Thank you all. Thank you very much. George, thank you very much for your kind introduction. Doctor. Doctor. [*Laughter*] I'm honored to be here, and it's an honor to be your President.

I thought about inviting Vice President Cheney to travel with me today. [*Laughter*] He said he's seen enough cardiologists lately. [*Laughter*] I'm pleased to report that he's feeling great, and you'll be happy to know that when it comes to following doctor's orders, he's a model patient.

I appreciate so very much the leadership of this august organization having me here, and I appreciate the fact that they invited my bigger little brother. [*Laughter*] I can't tell you how proud I am of Jeb. He is a really fine Governor of this important State.

I'm also pleased to be traveling with Members of the United States Congress from the State of Florida, John Mica, Ric Keller, and Dave Weldon. Thank you all for coming with me. Weldon informed me he's a doctor. He's representing your interests in the Halls of Congress.

And today we're in the hometown of the new Secretary of Housing, Mel Martinez.

I'm proud that Mel is the first Cuban American to serve in a President's Cabinet. Mr. Secretary, welcome home, but don't stay too long. [*Laughter*] You're going back to Washington with me; we've got a lot of work to do.

You know, I haven't been in front of so many people who poke and prod and examine since my last press conference. [*Laughter*] And I appreciate the chance to visit with so many distinguished doctors and their families. So many Americans live longer, healthier, and happier lives because of the important work you all do every single day. And I'm glad to have an opportunity to thank you in person.

Modern medicine continues to bring a revolution of hope and dignity into countless lives. The average life* expectancy in America today is 29 years longer than it was just a century ago. And those added years now have added vigor. Many forms of cancer, once incurable, are routinely treated and often cured. Diseases that grow more common with age, such as arthritis and osteoporosis, can be less debilitating than they once were. And heart disease, though still the leading cause of death in America for both men and women, is claiming fewer lives than ever before. Just 40 years ago, when patients were diagnosed with serious heart disease, treatment meant putting them in a hospital bed and trying to make them comfortable. Today, thanks to new surgeries, devices, and drugs, and thanks to doctors and researchers behind them, millions of Americans with heart disease live vigorous, productive lives. And Dick Cheney serves his country as Vice President of the United States.

This ongoing revolution in medicine is centered in America, and for good reason: Medical advances depend on innovation, and innovation depends on freedom. America has wisely resisted efforts to place medicine and health care into the hands of central planners. Government-controlled health care may spring from the best of motives, but a cumbersome bureaucracy and one-size-fits-all approach stifle innovation and do not produce the best of results. There is an appropriate role for Government in funding medical research, protecting consumers, and providing health care for our senior citizens.

Our health care system is strong, and it can be stronger. And as we improve and reform it, we must always respect the freedom that makes America's health care system the best in the world.

This year we have a real opportunity to improve health care. Today I want to talk about protecting the doctor-patient relationships with a Patients' Bill of Rights. But first, I can't resist putting in a plug for my budget and for tax relief.

My budget funds our Nation's important priorities, including many health care priorities. We increase funding for education and for military pay and benefits. We set aside $2.6 trillion of payroll taxes over the next 10 years for Social Security and for only Social Security. We double funding for Medicare over the next 10 years and make sure that every dime that comes in for Medicare is spent only on Medicare.

And as you know better than most, Medicare urgently needs reform. At a time when prescription drugs are often the treatment of choice for heart disease and many other illnesses, 99 percent of employer-provided health care plans offer some form of prescription drug coverage; yet, Medicare does not. Often, Medicare does not cover new treatments and innovative technologies. The Medicare bureaucracy is rigid and difficult and too often treats doctors as if you have nothing better to do than fill out forms. To offer our seniors better coverage and better health care, Medicare needs new life and new vitality.

One of the leaders in the effort to modernize Medicare is a heart surgeon, Senator Bill Frist of Tennessee. He's joined with Democrat Senator John Breaux and Republican Congressman Bill Thomas to set out

* White House correction.

a framework for reform. And I'm committed to working with Congress to reform Medicare and to make sure that every senior has access to affordable prescription drug coverage.

My budget also proposes refundable tax credits to make health insurance more affordable for working families. I propose making it easier for small businesses to join together so that they can purchase better and more affordable health coverage for their workers. And we increase funding for community and migrant health centers, so that over the next 5 years we double the number of people served at community centers in rural and low-income neighborhoods.

I've also asked Congress to increase funding for medical research, which gives hope to many who struggle with serious disease. My budget for next year requests an additional $2.8 billion for the National Institutes of Health, an important step toward our goal of doubling the budget for the NIH by the year 2003.

We've increased discretionary spending by 4 percent, greater than the rate of inflation. And after we fund important priorities in the ongoing operations of our Government, I believe we ought to pay down national debt. And so my budget pays down a record 2 trillion in debt over the next 10 years. And that sets up a $1 trillion contingency fund for emergencies or additional expenses. After funding priorities, after paying down debt, after setting up a contingency fund, we still have money left over.

And the fundamental question is, what do we do with it? Well, some in Congress want to spend it. They want to increase the size and scope of the Federal Government. That's not my vision. You see, I understand the surplus is not the Government's money; the surplus is the people's money. And I believe after meeting priorities, we need to send it back to the people who earned it in the first place. Not only are we not going to send it back; we don't need to take it in the first place.

This debate in Washington has moved beyond whether we should have tax relief, to how much it should be and who should get it. Now, to put it bluntly, some folks in Washington think all of the doctors in this room make too much money, and you shouldn't get any of your money back. That's a fact. I know you've worked hard to get to where you are. You spent long hours in training and school. You do important, life-saving work. You also pay a lot of taxes. And I think everybody, everyone who pay taxes, from the schoolteacher to the truck driver to the doctor, should get tax relief.

Be wary of those who talk about targeted tax cuts in Washington, those who want to pick the winners and losers. That's not my vision for Government. I don't believe the Government is to try to pick winners and losers in the Tax Code. The only fair way to do it is to say, "If you pay taxes, you ought to get relief."

My plan helps those at the bottom end of the economic scale. It lowers the rate to 10 percent and doubles the child credit. In fact, the greatest percentage benefits in my plan go to those at the lowest end of the economic ladder. But my plan also drops the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent, because I believe on principle that nobody in America, nobody in this room, should pay more than a third of his or her income to the Federal Government.

I hope you'll join me in making the case to Congress to enact a fiscally responsible budget and provide meaningful tax relief. It is necessary, and we can afford it. Don't be afraid of contacting a Senator of yours or a Member of the Congress. I'm sure they'd like to hear from you. [*Laughter*]

And there is another issue I hope you'll join me on, persuading those very same Members of both parties to work together to pass a comprehensive and meaningful Patients' Bill of Rights. I'm very familiar with this issue. When I was Governor of

Texas, I had to veto a bad patients' bill of rights, and then I signed some good ones. First, I was presented a bill that gave special interest treatment to selected HMO's. So I vetoed it and then worked with our insurance commissioner to write new patient protections that I proudly signed into law the next legislative session. I don't want that to happen again. This time I hope we can get it right the first time.

Doctors and their patients should be in charge of medical decisions. I want to sign a Patients' Bill of Rights this year, but I will not sign a bad one. And I cannot sign any one that is now before the Congress. So enacting a Patients' Bill of Rights this year is going to require some different thinking, a new approach, based on sound principles.

First, a Federal Patients' Bill of Rights must cover everyone, all patients in all private health plans. The standard should be strong enough to protect everyone, yet flexible enough to preserve the good work that has already been done in many States.

Second, we must guarantee all patients important rights: the right to get emergency treatment at the nearest emergency room; the right to see a specialist when they need one—say, just for an example, the right to see a cardiologist for a heart problem. Women should be able to visit their gynecologist, and parents their children's pediatrician, without going through a gatekeeper. All patients should have the right to participate in potentially life-saving clinical trials when standard treatment is not effective.

Third, if medical care is denied, patients should have the right to a fair and immediate review. People want health care quickly. They don't want to have to go through a legal, lengthy process to get it. I want to sign a bill that protects patients' rights with a strong, binding, independent review process. If your health plan denies you care, you should be able to appeal immediately to an independent, impartial review panel of medical doctors. And if they say you need the care, your health care plan must provide it. An effective medical review is the key to protecting patients' rights and the key to maintaining the doctor-patient relationship you work so hard to develop and preserve.

Fourth, a Patients' Bill of Rights should offer patients who have been harmed a meaningful remedy without inviting frivolous lawsuits. After independent review, if you have been harmed by your HMO's refusal to provide care, you have a legitimate complaint, and you should have recourse in court. With a strong, independent review process, most disagreements should not wind up in court. Our Federal legislation must allow the review process to work, not short-circuit it by inviting unnecessary lawsuits. With strong independent review, doctors make medical decisions, not the lawyers.

The fifth guideline for a Patients' Bill of Rights ensures that Americans will have access to affordable health care coverage. I want to sign protections that improve medical care, not make it impossible for patients to afford it or employers to provide coverage. Excess and frivolous litigation does harm to our health care system. It clogs the courts and consumes time and money. It undermines the trust between doctor and patient. It drives up insurance premiums for everyone.

We've enacted civil justice reforms in Texas to guard against frivolous litigation and excessive awards. To make sure health care coverage remains affordable, I will insist any Federal bill have reasonable caps on damage awards. And the caps in proposed legislation before Congress are too high and will drive up the costs of health care in America.

To encourage employers to continue to provide health care insurance for their employees, we must protect them from unnecessary litigation. Some proposals now before Congress fail to adequately address this problem and would even make it worse. Employers who decide up front they

will not make medical decisions should not be required to go to court all the time to prove they were not involved in those decisions. And I will not support a Federal law that subjects employers to new multiple lawsuits in 50 different States.

With these principles as our guide, I believe we can enact a Patients' Bill of Rights in the Congress this year. This issue has been debated in Washington time and time again. Over the years, alliances have been formed, and divisions have deepened. I hope Members of Congress will join me in advancing this debate beyond the arguments of the past.

Just as doctors no longer treat heart disease with bed rest, we should not approach this year's Patients' Bill of Rights stuck in last year's rut. Just as innovative approaches in medicine spur new breakthroughs, a new approach in Washington offers the hope that we will share the credit for success. Americans deserve comprehensive patient protections, and a new, commonsense approach may be just what the doctor ordered.

On this issue, the rewards are far greater than shared political success. The real reward will be knowing that we have helped put the healing powers of modern medicine within the reach of all who need them. Each of you holds that incredible power and upholds a great trust.

I appreciate the important work you do. You have my gratitude and my respect. And in the days ahead, I hope my plans for reform will have your support. Thank you for having me.

God bless. God bless America. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:24 a.m. in the Orange County Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to George A. Beller, immediate past president, American College of Cardiology; and Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida.

Remarks at a SENIORS FIRST Luncheon in Orlando
March 21, 2001

Thank you very much. Thank you for that warm welcome. I suspect you're cheering so loudly because I'm traveling in good company.

[*At this point, the President spoke in Spanish, and a translation was not provided.*]

I'm honored to be here with my brother, the Governor of Florida. He's a good man. You know something about—both of us share something in common: We picked a pretty darn good mother, and she's still telling us what to do. [*Laughter*] I'm listening all the time. He's listening about half the time. [*Laughter*]

What made me think of that is I saw Barbara sitting there. And then Mel Martinez—you all know Mel. [*Applause*] Yes. I think I made a pretty darn good pick when I named him to my Cabinet. I love Mel's story. He's a good man. [*Laughter*] He represents the really best about America, doesn't he—doesn't he—[*applause*]—that you can realize dreams in this country. And I'm so thrilled that he's agreed to sacrifice and serve the country. And he is a good man, as you know.

I'm honored to be traveling with Members from the United States Congress. We've got some Congressmen that are traveling with us today. These men are going to be responsible for working with our administration to make sure that we keep the promise to the elderly.

And so I want to tell you all that, for example, in our budget we doubled the Medicare budget over the next 10 years. And we're going to focus on making sure

children are educated, too. We're going to focus on keeping the promise to the elderly, and then we're also going to make sure that the young have a good chance for realizing the American Dream by making sure the schools are strong at the local level, making sure children aren't left behind.

I know you all care about that a lot. Many of you have got grandchildren, and you want to make sure the public school system holds out the hope for every child, regardless of their background, regardless of where they're from. And that's our dream; that's our dream for the country.

This is a fabulous land. I'm so honored to be your President. It is a huge, huge honor for me. So I want to thank you for your warm greeting. I look forward to walking around and shaking your hands and thanking you in person.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:28 a.m. in the ballroom at the Sociedad Cubana de Orlando community center. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida.

Remarks to Catholic Leaders
March 21, 2001

Thank you all very much for that warm reception, and welcome to the White House, the people's house. It is such an honor to live here, and it's an honor for me to receive you all. And I look forward to thanking you in person for coming.

It's also a high honor for me to be on the podium with so many outstanding leaders of faith. I've had the honor of meeting many of the cardinals who are here and many of the bishops and archbishops from around the country. I've been struck by how humble the good folks are, how there's a universal love for mankind and a deep concern for those who are not as fortunate as some of us. The Catholic Church is fortunate to have such strong, capable, decent leadership, and America is fortunate to have such strong leaders in our midst. I want to thank the cardinals and bishops who are here, and thank you for your service and love for your fellow mankind.

I've been struck by a lot of things as I've had the opportunity to meet the leadership of the Catholic Church. I think the thing that has captured my heart the most is the—not only universal care for the weak and the suffering but also the strong focus on making sure every child is educated.

And for those of you involved with the education system in America, thank you for your hard work. For those of you who are the administrators, thanks for providing great education. For those who give your hard-earned dollars to support the education systems around America, please continue to do so. [*Laughter*] Isn't that right, Bishop? [*Laughter*] It's an incredibly important part of the mosaic of a hopeful tomorrow.

I also appreciate the prayers of many of my fellow Americans. Many times layman and leader alike says, "Mr. President, we pray for you," and for that I'm most grateful. It does remind me that I think there's a great awakening in America. People are rediscovering the inspiration of faith in their lives and the importance of faith in our society. Faith gives our lives dignity, and faith gives our lives direction. Faith makes our Nation more just and more generous and welcoming.

All of you are part of the humanizing mission which is part of the "Great Commission" and the Pope John Paul II Cultural Center, which we will dedicate tomorrow, will bring this message to generations of Americans in this Capital of our Nation. The best way to honor Pope John Paul II, truly one of the great men, is to take his teaching seriously, is to listen to his words and put his words and teachings into action here in America. This is a challenge we must accept.

But you know something about our country? With the right focus and the right leadership, it's a challenge this Nation will accept, because this is a great land. The greatness of the country lies in the hearts and souls of our citizens. And again, I want to thank those of you who inspire and teach love and compassion and hope.

God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:18 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Statement on Proposed Legislation To Implement the Faith-Based Initiative

March 21, 2001

Earlier this year, I sent to the Congress my agenda to rally America's armies of compassion to address many of our toughest community challenges.

Government does not have a monopoly on compassion. And while Government cannot be replaced by charities, it should welcome them as partners, not view them as rivals.

Today, on a bipartisan basis, Members of the House and Senate took important first steps to advance this agenda to aid churches, synagogues, mosques, and communities in helping neighbors in need.

I welcome the bipartisan proposals that have been offered in the House by Representative J.C. Watts, Representative Tony Hall, and Speaker Dennis Hastert, and in the Senate by Senator Rick Santorum and Senator Joseph Lieberman. These new legislative initiatives demonstrate that momentum continues to build behind my agenda to rally America's armies of compassion. They represent a bipartisan consensus that Government must support our quiet heroes who are lifting lives and healing neighborhoods one heart and one act of kindness at a time.

I will continue to work in a bipartisan fashion with Congress to help those most in need by encouraging charitable giving and eliminating barriers to charitable works.

Remarks to the National Newspaper Association Government Affairs Conference

March 22, 2001

The President. Thanks for coming, and thanks for having me. Diane, I appreciate so very much the invitation. Ken, thank you for escorting me up here. And Jerry, thank you for that kind introduction. I do remember the Fourth of July parade. I remember how hot it was. And next time, let's make it a Christmas parade. [*Laughter*] He comes from a great town in a State I love a lot.

You said you never thought you would be introducing me the last time you saw me. But I can assure you, in 1978 when I was running for the U.S. Congress and you were running the newspaper in Lamb County, Texas, you certainly didn't think you would be introducing me as President—[*laughter*]—because you had that funny feeling I wasn't even going to win the race for the U.S. Congress, which was true. [*Laughter*] It's amazing how life works.

One of the interesting things I did learn in that race, we had a lot of little bitty counties in far west Texas. And Jerry ran one of the newspapers; he worked for a man named James Roberts. Maybe some of you all got to know James over time. He's a fine, distinguished Texan; Lord rest his soul. But he owned a string of little newspapers, in Andrews and Lamb County, and I think maybe in Muleshoe, Texas.

And I can remember knocking on the doors of the newspapers when I was traveling the district. It was a magnificent place to learn about what was going on in each county. It gave me a chance to get a feel for what the people were really all about. I got to hear the gossip, got to maybe spread a little good news on my side. But I came away with a deep respect for the small newspapers that dominate the landscape of America. There's a real sense of community when you walk into those newspapers and sit down with the publishers and the editors and the writers. It's really the best of America in many ways.

I sound somewhat nostalgic about those days. I'm loving what I'm doing. It's interesting that I'm doing it, in spite of the fact that my first race for public office I came in second in a two-man race. [*Laughter*] Life has its interesting twists and turns. Life is unpredictable. But it turns out if you aim, work hard, and treat people with respect, keep your priorities straight, life can turn out pretty good. And it certainly has for me. I'm honored to be your President. I'm honored to be here to discuss some issues that are important to our country.

I want to thank my friend Tommy Thompson for having been here. Tommy is serving our Nation very well as the important Cabinet position. I got to know Tommy as a Governor. You got to know him as a Governor. And he's a fine man. He represents the kind of Cabinet I've put together—distinguished citizens, all of whom are here to serve our country, all of whom have put aside their personal comforts to do what's right for America.

I appreciate my friend Roy Blunt. I understand he's coming or has been here—a Member of the United States Congress, a fellow I'm working closely with to try to get some legislation through the legislative process.

I want to talk about a couple of things, and then I'd like to weave issues in, in context of the budget that I presented to the Congress. It's important for opinionmakers such as yourself to hear my side of the budget.

See, there's a lot of folks in Washington that would like to send out information that might cloud the picture so that they get to keep more of the taxpayers' money here in Washington. We're in the midst of a big debate, and it's a healthy debate, as to what to do with the people's money. That's what the budget is all about. Remember, the context I come from, though, is not to do with what to do with the Government's money; it's what to do with the people's money. All the talk about the surplus as the Government's money misses the point. They forget who pay the bills. Those who say that the surplus is the Government's money, forget where it comes from. And one of the things I'm not going to forget is where it comes from; I'm going to remember where it comes from. It comes from hard-working people. It comes from entrepreneurs, small-business owners, hard-working folks who pay the bills for this Government.

So we sent up a commonsense budget to the Congress. I say "commonsense" because it sets priorities. When you run your businesses, you set priorities. That's sometimes the definition of success, is somebody who figures out how to set priorities and stay on those priorities. And that's what we did; we set some clear priorities. We funded public education, increased the funding of public education. It's the biggest increase of any Department in my budget.

Now, lest you forget where I came from, it's one thing to provide money at the Federal level, but I can assure you I'm a strong supporter of local control of schools. I believe that the best way to run the schools is to trust the local people. So we're increasing spending, but we're going to also increase power at the local level. One size does not fit all when it comes to the education of the children in America. We've got to have local control of schools; we've got to align authority and responsibility at the local level. And I'm working with Congress to do that.

But one of the cornerstones of reform for education is to hold people accountable for results. I'm a strong believer that in return for the receipt of taxpayers' money, States and local jurisdictions must develop accountability systems to tell us whether or not children can read. It's in your best interests, by the way, that we have a literate tomorrow. You're irrelevant if people can't read. [*Laughter*] And we need to start figuring out whether they can or cannot, early in a child's career. And so, the only way to do that is to measure.

Now, I'm against a national test because a national test would undermine local curriculum and local control of schools. But I am for saying, "In return for money, show us. Show us whether or not children can read and write and add and subtract." Hold people accountable. Use the accountability system not as a way to punish but as a way to correct problems early, before it's too late.

And you mark my words, when you have a system based upon the principles of high accountability and high—of high standards and strong accountability and local control of schools, children will learn. And that's what this country needs. They need an education system that's responsive, results-oriented, that focuses on each child as a child, that challenges the process-oriented system that asks the question, "How old are you? Oh, if you're 10, we'll just put you here. And if you're 14, you go here. And if you're 16, you go here." It's time in America we start asking the question, "What do you know?" And if you don't know what you're supposed to know, we're all going to come together to make sure you do, early, before it's too late.

I'm so confident that we can achieve what we all want, an educated tomorrow. And it starts with having systems in place—systems in place that encourage reform, based upon accountability.

Another priority in the budget I sent is more pay for the military. I am concerned about morale in the troops. It was a big issue during the course of the campaign. I said, if you give me a chance to be the President, we'll begin by increasing morale two ways. One is to pay people more money, so in our budget—we've increased the budget that I've submitted to Congress for better pay and better housing; and two, to have a Commander in Chief who will clarify the mission of the U.S. military. And the mission of the United States military is to have our troops well prepared and well trained, to be ready to fight and win war and, therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place. The mission of the military must be focused, and the job of the Commander in Chief is to focus that mission. And that's what I've done.

There will be a lot of talk on Capitol Hill about increasing military budgets, and my answer is, let's make sure we have a strategic plan before we do so. Let's have a blueprint of what the future ought to look like. Let's make sure—not only make

sure morale is high today, but as we begin to spend on weapons systems, let's make sure they fit into a plan so we can keep the peace as we go down the road. Many of the decisions that are made in the Defense Department today will affect how the military looks like 20 to 30 years from now. And I want to make sure that money is wisely spent and focused on how to keep the peace in the long run.

Another priority is retirement systems of Americans. And so the budget I set up says the payroll taxes are only going to be spent on one thing, and that's Social Security—that the Congress won't be using the payroll taxes for other programs. So—lockbox, I think, is the terminology they like to use up here. [*Laughter*] Rest assured, it's set aside only for Social Security.

And later on in the year, we're going to begin the process of debating how to make sure the Social Security System works as we go down the road. One of the things that—I went to a senior citizen center yesterday in Orlando, Florida, home of the great Governor Bush. [*Laughter*] And a couple of folks said there, "Now, you're not going to be messing with my Social Security check." They didn't quite put it that eloquently. [*Laughter*] But I said no.

Every time there's a campaign, there's a lot of noise and ads and stuff that try to frighten people into the voting booths. And by setting aside all the money that goes into Social Security for only Social Security, we can assure folks who rely upon Social Security that they're going to get their check.

But the fundamental question is, what happens to the younger workers, younger folks in America? Will there be a system available for them? And one of the things that we're going to start thinking about and encourage a lot of debate about is this notion about letting younger workers take some of their own money, some of their own payroll taxes, and invest them in the private markets to get a better rate of return on the money than we get now under the Social Security Trust.

You see, we've got to get a better rate of return on payroll taxes. Otherwise, there's not going to be enough people putting money in the system, compared to those who are taking it out of the system. I'm willing to think differently on the issue and encourage others to do so up here, as well.

Health care is a priority in our budget. We double the number, if we put enough money aside, double the number of folks who will be served by what's called community health centers. Perhaps you've got a community health center in your neighborhood. These are fundamentally important health care delivery systems that enable the indigent or other folks who are struggling with health care to be able to get primary care. These are good programs, and it's an effective part of the delivery of health care.

We double the Medicare budget in the budget I submitted to the United States Congress. We've increased funding so we can double the NIH budget by 2003, from when that initiative first started. There's a lot of programs that we focus on.

We increase discretionary spending by 4 percent. That's greater than the rate of inflation. It's probably greater than the pay raises you gave the people working for you. It's a pretty healthy increase. But the problem is, they're not used to that kind of fiscal responsibility in Washington. The discretionary spending at the end of last year increased by 8 percent.

So you've got a new President who comes to town and says, "Why don't we be fiscally responsible with the people's money? Why don't we, instead of increasing spending by 8 percent, be reasonable, take a commonsense approach, not try to be all things to all people at the Federal level?" And that's where the squawking started. That's where people started getting nervous, because fiscal-responsible spending is something that they're not used to.

But it's important. It's important to be responsible with the money. My point to you is, we can make priorities. Four percent of a budget that we're talking about of billions of dollars is a lot of money.

Now, there's a lot of talk about paying down debt, and we do so. The budget I submitted pays down $2 trillion of debt over a 10-year period of time. One of the things I want to try to remind Congress to think about is, there's not only debt at the national level; there's a lot of folks in your communities who have got credit card debt. There's all kinds of debt. And we pay down debt at the national level, but it's important to also remember, there are people struggling to get ahead, particularly with energy bills going up, the economy slowing down. We've got personal debt. And with people's money, it seems like, to me, we ought to encourage them to be able to manage their own accounts with some of their own money back.

I also am aware that sometimes things don't go as planned. So in the budget we submitted, there's one trillion over 10 years for contingencies. Now, you're probably saying to yourself, "He's talking about a lot of money," and I am. But incredibly enough, after meeting priorities and by slowing down discretionary spending to 4 percent and paying down debt and putting aside contingency money, there's still money left over—about $1.6 trillion. And the fundamental question is what to do with it.

And the debate is this: Do we increase the baselines of our budgets, or do we understand where the money came from and let the people keep it? I stand squarely on the side of letting the people keep it. I think it is so important for a couple of reasons: One, more money in people's pockets—more money in people's pockets will help provide a second wind for our economy; and, two, I trust people with their own money. I trust them more than I trust the Federal Government to make decisions on their behalf.

There is a fundamental, philosophical divide in Washington. It's basically, who do you trust? Who do you trust? I used to travel the country, and every time I'd go somewhere, there would be tax families at a stop. And I would say, well, so-and-so Smith family. And they would say, well, they pay $3,000 of Federal income taxes, and under our plan in which everybody who pays taxes gets relief, they're going to save $2,000—that would be the example, say. And I would say, who would you rather spend the money? Once you meet priorities in Washington, DC, the debate is, who would you rather spend their $2,000, the Smith family or the Federal Government? And I'm coming down on the side of the family every time, and that's what the debate is about.

We've got pretty good cashflow coming into the Treasury. In spite of the fact the economy is slowing down in the first 4 months of the year, the cashflow was $40 billion more than anticipated—$40 billion more. It sounds like, to me, somebody is getting overcharged. And I'm asking Congress for the refund for the people, and that's what the debate is.

And so, the tax plan we submitted is based upon some principles, as well. First of all, you will hear a lot of talk up here about targeted tax cuts. Basically, what that says is, Congress wants to decide who gets a tax cut and who doesn't, obviously. They want to decide who the winners are and who is not a winner when it comes to tax relief. That is not my view of Government.

My view of Government is that everybody who pays taxes ought to get tax relief, that the United States Congress nor the Federal Government should try to say, "Okay, you pay, but you don't get anything; and you pay, and you do." That's not my vision of fairness and fairplay when it comes to the Federal Government. So everybody who pays gets relief.

We drop all rates, and we simplify the code. Instead of five rates, there's four rates. We drop the bottom rate from 15

percent to 10 percent and increase the child credit from $500 to $1,000 per child. That's a very important part of the reform, because the Tax Code we have today is incredibly unfair to people who are struggling—what I like to call struggling on the outskirts of poverty, people who are working hard to get to the middle class. And under this Tax Code—take the example of the single mother making $22,000 a year. The lady is raising two children. First of all, she has got the toughest job in America. And secondly, under her circumstances, for every additional dollar she earns, she pays a higher marginal rate on that dollar than someone who is successful. She starts to lose earned-income tax credit. She pays the 15 percent bracket, and she pays payroll tax. The marginal rate on her additional dollar is nearly 50 percent. And that is not fair. That's not what America is about. America is, the harder you work, the easier the middle class ought to become, and the more money you get to keep. And by dropping the bottom rate and increasing the child credit, we make the code much more fair to people at the bottom end of the economic ladder. And I think there's universal agreement about that point here in Washington.

I also strongly believe we need to cut all rates, including the top rate, from 39.6 to 33 percent. And there's a lot of rhetoric about that. I'm sure you've heard it. But it's very important for Congress to understand this fact: Most small businesses in America are unincorporated, or Subchapter S's. Most small businesses pay at the 39.6 percent rate. And by dropping the top rate to 33 percent, we stimulate small businesses in America; we encourage entrepreneurship.

One of the things I like to tell people is, the role of Government is not to create wealth. The role of Government is to create an environment in which the entrepreneur or the small-business owner can flourish. That's the role of Government. And dropping the top rate will provide more cashflow for small-business owners to be able to invest, to buy new printers, to employ more people.

Now, I've heard the rhetoric, but they're missing the point. The point is, how do we encourage growth, particularly when the economy is beginning to slow down? And a good way to do so is to drop that top rate.

We also have got two other reforms that I want to mention to you. One is, we do something about the marriage penalty. Our Tax Code taxes marriages. It doesn't—I mean, penalizes marriage. It doesn't make any sense; so mitigate what the marriage penalty does. And we also eliminate the death tax.

I want to quote one of your own—publisher from Eufaula, Alabama, the Tribune—Joel Smith. I hope I'm—if Joel is here, I hope I'm not embarrassing you. But sometimes, when we say things, words come back to haunt us. [*Laughter*] Well, not exactly haunt, in this case. [*Laughter*] Here's what he wrote: "I hope the President and Congress will repeal the death tax and help my family keep publishing our 72-year-old, twice-weekly newspaper." That's what he said. He represents the sentiments of hundreds of Americans who work hard to build up their asset base, with the dream of being able to pass it on to a family member.

It doesn't matter whether you're a newspaper publisher or a farmer or a rancher or a small-business person. Many folks have got the dream of working hard as they can to build up an asset base and to have the pleasure of knowing a family member is going to run the newspaper or manage the farm. And yet, our Tax Code makes it awfully hard for people to realize that dream. The death tax is unfair. It is unfair to tax a person's assets twice. And it's not fair to prevent people from passing their own business, their own property from one generation to the next. We've go to get rid of the death tax.

And so that's the rationale of the budget I submitted. And we're making progress, I think. It used to be, "Well, we're never going to have any tax relief." And now, the discussion is how much and how soon. And as far as I'm concerned, the sooner, the better. And I look forward to working with both Republicans and Democrats to get this done. This is the right thing for America. It's the right thing for our country to have meaningful, real, fair tax relief.

There are a lot of other issues that, of course, I'm involved with. One of the biggest issues is changing the tone in our Nation's Capital. It's not really an issue like we know it. It's not the kind of thing that requires a piece of legislation but does require an attitude, and it starts with the President.

We need more respect in our Nation's Capital. We need people that respect other's opinions. I used to remember looking up at Washington from Austin, Texas, and thinking about, surely there's a better way to have discourse on important issues than without the name calling and finger pointing and unnecessary politics on important issues that affect the people.

One of my hopes—and I believe we're making progress—is to convince people of both parties to treat each other with respect. And it starts with the President being respectful of somebody else's opinion. I hope that by changing the tone in Washington, we can change the tone in other places around the country, too, where we can prove that there can be respectful disagreement.

I know you and your newspapers try to do that all the time. You put out opinions, and you do so in a way that I'm confident is respectful. And it's important. It's important for our country to be a nation that honors—that respects other people's opinions. That's what democracy should be all about.

We're not all the same. We don't always agree, but we can do so in a way that brings honor to the process. And it's important to do that, as well, because our system is only as good as those who are willing to participate. And I hope—my hope of hopes is, once my stay is through up here—and by the way, I'm heading back to Texas once it's over—I hope somebody says, "Well, you know, I think I might try to enter the public arena. I'd like to try to serve my country." You don't have to try to serve your country as the President; you can serve your country as a school board member or as a county commissioner. There's all kinds of ways to serve our Nation.

It's important for those of us who have got the high honor and responsibility of public service to remember that there's something more than personal ambition involved. We have a responsibility to set a tone and to call upon the best. And that's my pledge to you. You may not agree with my budget or how I'm approaching things, but when it's all said and done, I think you will agree with how I conduct myself in public office. It's a big responsibility.

I think there's a second change taking place up here. On the one hand, we've got a culture of respect developing; another is a culture of achievement. We're beginning to get some things done. Again, people may not agree with some of the things that are happening, but for example, the other day I signed a Senate resolution to change the ergonomic rules. Both Republicans and Democrats came together. Some people liked it; some people didn't like it; but nevertheless, it happened quickly. It's a good piece of public policy, as far as I was concerned. It's the ability for our Government to analyze regulations and to put a cost-benefit analysis to them. And the cost in this case looked far to exceed the benefits, and therefore, Congress acted.

I believe we're going to see that happen. I believe people—that there's going to be a culture of success and results. My job as your President is to share success, is to say to both parties that are involved, "Come together and get some things done,

and I'll do my best to explain to the people that you were involved." See, there's a time for politics, and there's a time for policy. And the way I view it is, once you get sworn in, that the politics is over. In my case, it took a little longer. [*Laughter*]

And now it's time to do the people's business, and I believe we're making progress. I want to thank both the Republicans and the Democrats who are joining in this effort. I hope America's taking notice. It's the right thing to do, and it's the right way to conduct the people's business.

I'm honored you let me come by to visit with you. I'm honored to be your President.

God bless you all.

[*At this point, the President was presented with a T-shirt.*]

The President. It will play good in Crawford, Texas. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:47 a.m. in the Regency Ballroom at the Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill. In his remarks, he referred to Diane Everson, president, Kenneth H. Rhoades, vice president, and Jerry Tidwell, board member, National Newspaper Association; and Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida. S.J. Res. 6, approved March 20, was assigned Public Law No. 107–5.

Exchange With Reporters on the Expulsion of Russian Diplomats
March 22, 2001

Q. Relations with the Russians in trouble, headed for trouble?

The President. No, the actions we took yesterday speak for themselves. I'm confident that we can have good relations with the Russians. There are some areas where we can work together. But we made the right decision yesterday.

Q. Will Moscow expel some United States diplomats?

The President. I have no idea with Moscow is going to do.

Q. Should they—is that appropriate? When will you meet with any of Russian——

The President. All I can tell you is that the actions we took yesterday speak for themselves. It's the right decision to make, and having said that, I believe we can have a working relationship with the Russians. I intend to have a working relationship with the Russians. I suspect the first time I'll have a chance to sit down with Mr. Putin is when I head overseas to the G–7-plus-1, but our Government made the right decision yesterday.

Q. Mr. President, what about concerns that this takes us back to a cold war mentality or strategy?

The President. We made the right decision yesterday. I was presented with the facts; I made the decision; it was the right thing to do. And having said that, I believe that we'll have a good working relationship with the Russians. But we did the right thing yesterday.

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:15 a.m. at the Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill. In his remarks, the President referred to President Vladimir Putin of Russia. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks at the Dedication of the Pope John Paul II Cultural Center
March 22, 2001

Your Excellency, thank you very much. You will be pleased to hear, my mother is still telling me what to do. [*Laughter*] And I'm listening most of the time.

Cardinal Maida, thank you for your vision, and thank you for your smile. What a great smile. Cardinal Szoka, thank you very much for your hospitality. And Cardinal McCarrick, let me congratulate you on becoming a cardinal last month. Though we're both new to our jobs, I'm the only one who is term limited. [*Laughter*] I may be just passing through, and I may not be a parishioner, but I'm proud to live in your archdiocese. I'm pleased to join with all the church leaders and special guests here today to dedicate the cultural center. It is my high honor to be here.

When Cardinal Wojtyla spoke here at Catholic University in 1976, few imagined the course his life would take or the history his life would shape. In 1978 most of the world knew him only as the Polish Pope. There were signs of something different and deeper. One journalist, after hearing the new Pope's first blessing in St. Peter's Square, wired back to his editors: "This is not a Pope from Poland; this is a Pope from Galilee." From that day to this, the Pope's life has written one of the great inspiring stories of our time.

We remember the Pope's first visit to Poland in 1979, when faith turned into resistance and began the swift collapse of imperial communism. The gentle young priest once ordered into forced labor by Nazis became the foe of tyranny and a witness to hope. The last leader of the Soviet Union would call him "the highest moral authority on Earth."

We remember his visit to a prison, comforting the man who shot him. By answering violence with forgiveness, the Pope became a symbol of reconciliation.

We remember the Pope's visit to Manila in 1995, speaking to one of the largest crowds in history, more than 5 million men and women and children. We remember that as a priest 50 years ago, he traveled by horse-cart to teach the children of small villages. Now he's kissed the ground of 123 countries and leads a flock of one billion into the third millennium.

We remember the Pope's visit to Israel and his mission of reconciliation and mutual respect between Christians and Jews. He is the first modern Pope to enter a synagogue or visit an Islamic country. He has always combined the practice of tolerance with a passion for truth.

John Paul, himself, has often said, "In the designs of Providence, there are no mere coincidences." And maybe the reason this man became Pope is that he bears the message our world needs to hear.

To the poor, sick, and dying, he carries a message of dignity and solidarity with their suffering. Even when they are forgotten by men, he reminds them they are never forgotten by God. "Do not give in to despair," he said, in the South Bronx, "God has your lives in His care, goes with you, calls you to better things, calls you to overcome."

To the wealthy, this Pope carries the message that wealth alone is a false comfort. The goods of the world, he teaches, are nothing without goodness. We are called, each and every one of us, not only to make our own way but to ease the path of others.

To those with power, the Pope carries a message of justice and human rights. And that message has caused dictators to fear and to fall. His is not the power of armies or technology or wealth; it is the unexpected power of a baby in a stable, of a man on a cross, of a simple fisherman who carried a message of hope to Rome.

Pope John Paul II brings that message of liberation to every corner of the world. When he arrived in Cuba in 1998, he was greeted by signs that read, "Fidel is the Revolution!" But as the Pope's biographer put it, "In the next 4 days, Cuba belonged to another revolutionary." We are confident that the revolution of hope the Pope began in that nation will bear fruit in our time. And we're responsible to stand for human dignity and religious freedom wherever they are denied, from Cuba to China to southern Sudan.

And we, in our country, must not ignore the words the Pope addresses to us. On his four pilgrimages to America, he has spoken with wisdom and feeling about our strengths and our flaws, our successes and our needs.

The Pope reminds us that while freedom defines our Nation, responsibility must define our lives. He challenges us to live up to our aspirations, to be a fair and just society where all are welcomed, all are valued, and all are protected. And he is never more eloquent than when he speaks for a culture of life.

The culture of life is a welcoming culture, never excluding, never dividing, never despairing, and always affirming the goodness of life in all its seasons. In the culture of life we must make room for the stranger. We must comfort the sick. We must care for the aged. We must welcome the immigrant. We must teach our children to be gentle with one another. We must defend in love the innocent child waiting to be born.

The center we dedicate today celebrates the Pope's message, its comfort, and its challenge. This place stands for the dignity of the human person, the value of every life, and the splendor of truth. And above all, it stands, in the Pope's words, for the "joy of faith in a troubled world."

I'm grateful that Pope John Paul II chose Washington as the site of this center. It brings honor, and it fills a need. We are thankful for the message. We are also thankful for the messenger, for his personal warmth and prophetic strength, for his good humor and his bracing honesty, for his spiritual and intellectual gifts, for his moral courage, tested against tyranny and against our own complacency.

Always, the Pope points us to the things that last and the love that saves. We thank God for this rare man, a servant of God and a hero of history. And I thank all of you for building this center of conscience and reflection in our Nation's Capital.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:39 p.m. at the center on the campus of the Catholic University of America. In his remarks, he referred to Bernard J. Harrington, bishop of Winona, MN, who introduced the President; Adam Cardinal Maida, archbishop of Detroit, MI; Edmund Cardinal Szoka, president, Pontifical Commission for Vatican City State; and Theodore Cardinal McCarrick, archbishop of Washington, DC.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Vice Premier Qian Qichen of China and an Exchange With Reporters

March 22, 2001

President Bush. It's my honor to welcome our distinguished guest from China. China is a great country. China has got vast potential, and we've got common interests in China. And I look forward to discussing our interests.

Our relationship, of course, will be a complex relationship. There will be areas

where we can find agreement, such as trade. There will be some areas where we have some disagreements. I look forward to committing to this distinguished leader that any disagreements we will have, we will conduct ourselves with mutual respect. I will be firm, and I suspect he will be firm, in our opinions, but we will do so in a respectful way. It is in our Nation's best interests that we have good relations with China.

And before I introduce our distinguished guest, I do want to say how much I'm looking forward to going to China. I'll be going next fall; the Government has invited me to go to Beijing. I accept the invitation. We'll work out the arrangements, but I'm really looking forward to it. As a young man, I visited my mother and dad in China in 1975, and I look forward to my return. I can't wait to see the change, the contrast between when I was a younger fellow and now, kind of an older guy. [*Laughter*]

But I'm looking forward to coming to your country, sir. Welcome.

Vice Premier Qian. I fully agree to what President Bush just said. Indeed, China and the United States are major countries. To maintain friendly relations and cooperation between China and the United States is in the interest of Asia, the Pacific region, and the world at large.

Where we have shared interests, we can advance our relationship forward. Where we disagree, we can have very good exchange of views. Some issues can be approached in the spirit of seeking common ground, while shelving the differences.

I'm sure ways can be found to solve all the problems. I view my visit as a very successful one, because in the exchange of letters, President Jiang and President Bush already reached common consensus, which has laid a solid foundation for the growth of our relationship in the new century.

We are looking forward to welcoming President Bush in China in the coming fall.

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

Gao Zhan/Taiwan

Q. What do you have to say, sir, to your visitor about the detention of an American University professor and, until recently, her husband and son, who is an American citizen? And secondly, are you inclined to allow the sale of destroyers to Taiwan?

President Bush. I will echo the sentiments that the Secretary of State said today about the fact that a U.S. citizen was detained without any notification. I look forward to discussing this with our honorable guest and will do so.

We have obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act, and we'll honor those obligations. No decision has been made yet as to the sale of weapons to Taiwan.

One of our guests from the Chinese press.

President's Upcoming Visit to China

Q. Mr. President, what are your expectations for your forthcoming trip, October, to Shanghai and Beijing?

President Bush. I look forward to seeing the modernization that has taken place. I look forward to seeing the beautiful countryside that I remember so well.

But most of all, I look forward to getting to know the leaders of China. I think the best thing I can do is to—the best thing our delegation will do is to be able to sit down, face to face, and have an honest dialog. People will find that I'm a straightforward person, that I represent my country's interests in a very straightforward way, but I will do so with respect.

Taiwan

Q. Mr. President, is there anything that China can say or do that would influence your decision about which weapons to sell Taiwan?

President Bush. This meeting will give me a chance to confirm the fact that I will honor our obligations under the Taiwan relations law. I look forward to explaining that as clearly as I can to our distinguished guest. If he cares to bring up the subject

and wishes to make a case, I will be glad to listen, but no decision has been made yet. And I'll do what I think is in the best interests of our relationships and in the best interests of conforming to obligations we have.

Q. Mr. President, may I speak in Chinese?

President Bush. Are you with the Chinese press, because your English is perfect.

Q. Yes.

President Bush. You speak better English than I do. [*Laughter*]

Human Rights/Former President Bush

[*At this point, the journalist spoke briefly in Chinese and then resumed in English.*]

Q. ——about the gathering outside of the Falun Gong. The State Department has decided to sponsor a resolution to condemn the human rights. And for the past few years it has been failed. And I just wonder, Mr. President, what are you going to try to tell the Chinese side how to improve their human rights?

And my second question is regarding—the Chinese seem very warm to your father; they come, delegation after delegation, visiting your father. Are you going to be teached by your father regarding your China policy?

President Bush. Well, the Chinese, I'm convinced, like my father because he married well. [*Laughter*] My mother is very well respected in China, as is my dad, because they spent time there, and they befriended a lot of folks who are now leaders.

It will come as no surprise to our Chinese guest that I'm a believer in religious freedom, and I will make a—state it politely and as clearly as I can that ours is a nation that respects religious freedom; ours is a nation that honors religious freedom; and that our relationship will move forward, but it will certainly be a lot easier to move forward in a constructive way when our people with whom we conduct our affairs honor religious freedom within their borders.

Q. Thank you.

President Bush. I'd like to thank the press for not violating the beeper policy. [*Laughter*]

Q. We didn't want to get Gordon in trouble again. [*Laughter*]

President Bush. Gordon became an international figure. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:03 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to American University scholar Gao Zhan, detained in China since February 11, and her husband, Xue Donghua, and their 5-year-old son, U.S. citizen Andrew Xue, who were held separately for nearly a month; and Assistant Press Secretary Gordon Johndroe. Vice Premier Qian referred to President Jiang Zemin of China. The Vice Premier spoke in Chinese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Prepared for Delivery to a Friends of Ireland Luncheon
March 15, 2001

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. *Taoiseach,* Secretary of State for Northern Ireland John Reid, First Minister David Trimble, Deputy First Minister Seamus Mallon, Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams, Secretary Powell, Majority Leader Lott, other Members of Congress, thank you.

I thank the Speaker for the invitation to come here to celebrate the shared history and heritage that unite Ireland and

America. It is a great honor. And I promise that my remarks today will be briefer than the last time I spoke on Capitol Hill.

Some of you may be aware that I don't attend a lot of formal lunches like this. But I had a change of heart when I saw that the Speaker's menu included Tex-Mex food. I just couldn't pass up the chance to try a green burrito.

On Saint Patrick's Day, we all get to be Irish for a day. There has been a lot of speculation about whether I'm part Irish. I must be. People say I talk like James Joyce writes.

Today I will speak plainly about an extremely important topic, peace in Northern Ireland. The United States will remain unwavering in our support of peace. We will remain unwavering in our support for all parties who show courage and leadership on behalf of peace. And we will remain unalterably opposed to anyone who would destroy peace by preaching or practicing violence.

Much of the progress toward peace in the past several years has been aided by the engagement of the United States. As I told Prime Minister Blair—and as I will tell Prime Minister Ahern tomorrow—the United States stands ready to continue that engagement. The reason is simple: Peace in Northern Ireland is in America's strong national interest.

The peace that holds today has many authors, from President Clinton to leaders from Britain, Ireland, and Northern Ireland to American political leaders, such as Senator Mitchell. The Good Friday agreement remains the best hope for lasting peace for the people of Northern Ireland. The goal of the United States is to see that agreement fully implemented.

There are two reasons for this. First, this is what the people of Ireland and Northern Ireland voted for back on May 22, 1998. And they did so by a very large margin. Second, the Good Friday agreement embodies principles of fundamental fairness without which peace will never breathe.

What are those principles? First, as stated in the agreement itself, "it is for the people of the island of Ireland alone, by agreement between the two parts . . . to exercise their right to self-determination on the basis of consent." The second principle is that of territorial integrity, that borders should never be changed through violence. Third, that terrorism is always and everywhere wrong. And fourth, there is the principle of equality of representation and equal treatment regardless of religion, race, or ethnicity.

The progress the parties have made in putting these principles into practice has made a difference—a big difference. And no one knows this better than the people of Northern Ireland themselves. Trade, investment, and jobs are up. Violence is down from previous levels. More people are moving into Northern Ireland than are moving out. In most places on most days for most families, life is normal. They don't have to worry when they get on a bus, go to a store or church, or send a child to school. And no one can put a price on that peace of mind.

But no one can or should take this progress for granted, no one on either side of the border, either side of the Irish Sea, or either side of the Atlantic. It may be tempting for the parties to think they face a choice between further progress and the status quo. But in fact, the actual choice is probably between progress and a return to violence, because extremists on both sides still seek to destroy the agreement. Delay and impasse create a vacuum that they will try to fill. We must not let them.

The talks that Prime Ministers Blair and Ahern convened in Belfast last week created an opportunity to restore momentum toward resolving these issues and fully implementing the Good Friday agreement. Keeping the process moving forward will mean compromise, hard work, and trust. Trust is critical to resolving tough issues facing the parties: building a police force

that has the respect of all the people; putting arms finally and forever beyond use; achieving a normal security presence throughout the society; making sure the new political institutions are here to stay. Now is the time to act—as Yeats said, "Do not wait to strike till the iron is hot, but make it hot by striking."

The parties in Northern Ireland, many of whose leaders are represented here today, have shown themselves capable of rising to the occasion and moving forward with wisdom and confidence. And as you do so, know that the United States will be ready to help in any way the governments and the parties find useful.

It's been said that Ireland is a place where "the inevitable never happens and the unexpected constantly occurs." Three years ago, the parties unexpectedly gave us the Good Friday agreement. Weeks later, citizens in all parts of the island defied all expectations by voting to approve the agreement in overwhelming numbers. This year on Saint Patrick's Day, let us all resolve to push for peace, a lasting, real, and needed peace.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President delivered the remarks at approximately noon in the Rayburn Room at the U.S. Capitol. The prepared text referred to First Minister David Trimble and Deputy First Minister Seamus Mallon, Northern Ireland Executive; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland; and former Senator George J. Mitchell, who chaired the multiparty talks in Northern Ireland. This text was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 23. The remarks as delivered were not released.

Exchange With Reporters in Portland, Maine
March 23, 2001

Expulsion of Russian Diplomats

Q. In response to the fact that the Russians responded in kind——

The President. They can make whatever decisions they deem necessary. Our country took the right course of action.

Q. What message does it send, though, do you think?

The President. It says that we will be firm and consistent in our foreign policy.

[*At this point, the President continued his tour of the Salvation Army Senior Center.*]

Tax Relief Legislation

Q. One more question, Mr. President.

The President. Same subject?

Q. No, on tax cuts. Even if, with retroactivity, the size of the package were to get bigger than $1.6 trillion, is it worthwhile if it provides more money for people up front during this slowing economy?

The President. Well, I think we can accelerate tax relief—we should accelerate tax relief—and keep the size of the tax relief package at the same level. I'm confident we can do both. And I've told those who think it ought to be smaller and those who think it ought to be bigger that it ought to be $1.6 trillion.

The key thing is to make sure that we have tax relief that's meaningful, and to get as much money in the people's pockets as quickly as possible to provide a stimulus package.

Q. But how do you do both?

The President. Well, that's what we're going to work with the Congress on, is to make sure that we come with a size of the package that fits into the budget and at the same time, get money into people's pockets as quickly as possible. There are ways to do that. You could delay one aspect

of the total tax relief package for one year, for example. I mean, there are ways to get it done. The key thing is that good people are coming together to try to effect good, sound fiscal policy and to stimulate the economy.

Q. So, Mr. President, if something like what Senator Domenici has proposed happened, there would be some give elsewhere to keep it within the $1.6 trillion?

The President. I think we ought to work to keep it within the $1.6 trillion. I've sent that message. I hear Members of Congress saying, "Now we have the opportunity to load up the tax relief package for different projects." And my message is, keep it at $1.6 trillion. There are others who, of course, want to diminish it, as well. And my answer to them is, let's keep it at $1.6 trillion.

Q. Would you oppose anything like a rebate that brought it above $1.6 trillion?

The President. Well, we're working with the Congress to keep it within the bounds of $1.6 trillion. I saw what Senator Domenici said; he was talking about accelerating by about $40 billion. Well, that's a rounding number when you're talking in terms of trillions.

Campaign Finance Reform Legislation

Q. If campaign financial legislation that banned soft money from individuals and that did not include paycheck protection in labor unions reach your desk, would you veto it?

The President. Well, I'm watching the debate very carefully. My message is, I would like a bill to sign, and I want all parties involved in the debate to know that I'm anxious to sign a bill. I look forward to a bill and am confident that they will be able to come up with a bill that I can sign.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—any one position?

The President. Well, let me put it to you this way. I would—I believe they can come up with a reform that will meet the parameters that I've laid out that I can sign.

Expulsion of Russian Diplomats

Q. Mr. President, are you worried about this tit for tat with the Russians and that it could get out of hand and hurt U.S.-Russian relations?

The President. No, I believe we can have good, strong relations with the Russians. They'll just understand my administration is one that takes firm positions when we think we're right. That doesn't preclude the ability for Mr. Putin and me, for example, to meet at some point in time and have a good, honest discussion about common interests, areas where we can work together, and be able to discuss our disagreements in an open and honest way.

Tax Relief Legislation

Q. Are you unalterably opposed to the idea of some kind of midterm review? I know you don't like the word "trigger," but anything that takes a look to see whether surpluses really materialize?

The President. Well, it depends on what it is. There's a lot of ideas now being floated out in the Congress, and I'm open-minded to any good idea. And I'll listen to what different Members have to say. The key thing is that we have meaningful, real tax relief, where everybody who pays taxes gets relief and where, to the best extent possible, accelerate the tax relief to get money in people's pockets to serve as a stimulus to the economy.

Q. So a trigger is not out of the question?

The President. Again, any suggestion that people give I'm willing to listen to. Obviously, one of my concerns is that a tax relief package be undone because Congress wasn't fiscally responsible in its spending. I won't support a measure that says to Congress, spend all the money you want and, therefore, diminish the tax relief plan that we've gotten passed for the people, because one way is, to make sure that the surpluses don't exist, is if Congress isn't fiscally responsible with the people's money.

Expulsion of Russian Diplomats

Q. [*Inaudible*]—speak to President Putin before you have a face-to-face meeting in June?

The President. Maybe. I'm not sure yet.

Education

Q. Maine's education—[*inaudible*]—worried that your plan for a national testing——

The President. I'm going to address that today. I appreciate you asking that question. The Governor is here somewhere—the Governor and I talked about that. Maine has got a very strong accountability system, and it has enabled the public elected officials to address problems. When I talk about accountability systems, I talk about those developed by States and local jurisdictions, and Maine is a perfect example.

One of the reasons I've come to this State is, not only is it a special spot in my heart because of an address down the road here, but this is a State where accountability and education go hand in hand. And in no way, shape, or form would I want Federal policy to undermine the good work that Governor King and others in Maine have done.

So when I talk about local accountability and a willingness to set standards, I think of places like Texas and a place like Maine.

Gov. Angus S. King, Jr., of Maine. We've been doing testing in the 4th, 8th, and 11th grade in Maine since 1986. We published the results on the Internet by school, by school district, and it's accountability with a capital A.

The President. Yes. I know there's—I'm aware that there was some consternation about proposals that I'm working with both Republicans and Democrats on in the Congress. People have got to remember I was a Governor, and I wasn't particularly happy when the Federal Government began to tell us what to do, particularly when it came to educating our children. And consistent in the plans that I'm working with the Congress on is that philosophy that we trust the local people. And the people of Maine have been very fortunate to have a Governor of this caliber to look after the public education system here.

And as the Governor will tell you, the whole basis of reform is strong accountability, because you don't know whether—unless you measure, you don't know whether children are learning. And anyway, I'd better save some of the remarks for the speech. That way you'll pay attention.

Governor King. I've got a motto for you, Mr. President: Does it work, and how do you know?

The President. There you go. I may copy it.

Anybody hungry? You look like a man who could use a meal. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:10 a.m. during a tour of the Salvation Army Senior Center. In his remarks, the President referred to President Vladimir Putin of Russia. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks to the Chamber of Commerce in Portland
March 23, 2001

Man, Governor, you fired them up. [*Laughter*] I appreciate so very much, Governor, your being here. I know the good people of this State appreciate how you conduct yourself in office. Like your predecessor, my friend Jock McKernan, you brought a lot of class to your statehouse. I love your style, and I really appreciate

your focus, because you care about the people of this State. You care deeply about the citizens of Maine, and it's clear the citizens of Maine appreciate your care for them. So thank you so much for being here.

Rick, thanks for inviting me. [*Laughter*] Where's the wild man? [*Laughter*] Wild lady. Thank you all for coming today. It's an honor to be here, and it's an honor to be your President.

It's an honor to be traveling with members of the congressional delegation. I had the privilege of flying from Washington to Portland with your Congressman, Tom Allen. I don't know Congressman Allen well. I know he's a smart man—maybe a little smarter if he comes around my way more often. [*Laughter*] But I respect Tom's intellect, and I respect his service to the people of Maine. Thank you very much, Congressman, for being here.

And you've got two fantastic United States Senators. Olympia and Susan are smart, capable women who aren't afraid to speak their mind, even to the President of the United States. [*Laughter*] As a matter of fact, I'm beginning to believe they're not afraid to speak their mind especially to the President of the United States. [*Laughter*] But they care about their State; they care about their country. I view them as strong allies and good friends. Thank you very much, both, for being here.

And then of course, there's your mayor. Madam Mayor, I don't know why it is every time I see you, I feel like smiling. But I appreciate your friendship. Thanks so much for being here.

Most of the time when I come to this beautiful State, you don't have to cross-country ski to get into the auditorium. [*Laughter*] But I've got, obviously, fond memories of this beautiful State. I'm hoping my mother invites me back this summer. I'd better make sure I behave. [*Laughter*]

I'm reminded of the time when I first became the Governor of Texas. I went to a dedication for those who served in the Pacific theater in World War II. It was in central Texas, a little town called Fredericksburg. My mom and dad were there, and Laura, the great First Lady of the United States, was there. And I was really looking forward to welcoming all the World War II vets. It was a chance to say thanks on behalf of the sons and daughters of the great generation. And I said, "Mr. President,"—that was for my dad, who was the head of the parade—I said, "welcome." And everybody cheered. And I said, "Mother." Before I could get out another word, the place went wild. And I said, "Well, Mother, it's clear the people of Texas love you, and so do I, but you are still telling me what to do after 50 years." And a guy in a big cowboy hat moved out in the middle of Main Street, Fredericksburg, and cupped his hands and screamed at the top of his lungs in front of 30,000 constituents, "You better listen to her too, boy." [*Laughter*] I can assure you that the President of the United States is listening to his mother. Remember that. [*Laughter*]

The reason I thought of Mother is, I thought of the Barbara Bush Children's Hospital here at the Maine Medical Center. It is a proud moment in her life that the good folks at the Maine Medical Center dedicated the hospital for her. I can't think of a better—[*applause*]—it is a privilege—it is a privilege for her to have her name on an institution based on love and healing and care. It also reminds me of how deep our ties are to the State of Maine. My folks love coming to Maine, and they love it a lot. And they can't wait for the snow to melt—[*laughter*]—so they can get back up here. But anyway, thanks for your hospitality.

I want to talk a little bit about budgeting and the importance of good, sound, commonsense budgeting in Washington, DC. I found it's more effective for me to kind of get out of the Nation's Capital and explain my budget face to face with folks,

than to rely upon the filter to do so. Sometimes the facts get kind of distorted. Sometimes it's hard to get reality to fight through the folks. So let me explain my budget, if you don't mind, and what we intend to do with money if we're able to bring fiscal sanity to the Nation's Capital.

Step one on a commonsense budget is to set priorities. It's really important for the Governor or the President to use the executive branch to set priorities so that those who spend money stay focused. Without priorities, the tendency is to try to be all things to all people.

So the priorities in the budget I submitted are these. One, educating our children is a priority. The biggest increase of any Department in my budget goes to the Department of Education. I want you to also understand, though, I remember where I came from. I came from a State—I was a Governor—I firmly trust local folks to run the schools. The people who care most about the children in the State of Maine are the citizens of Maine. And the Federal Government, while it increases spending, must trust the Governors and local authorities. One size does not fit all when it comes to educating children. So we increased spending. But I look forward to working with the Senators and the Congressmen of the—pass power out of Washington, to provide a maximum flexibility so that the Governors and school board folks can take money and meet and match them to the needs that exist. So step one is an accountability—step one of a education reform program is local control of schools. It is a redline for me when it comes to Federal legislation.

But I also know—and I know there is some consternation here in the State of Maine about the call to hold people accountable for results. My attitude is, if you receive Federal money, you ought to measure to determine whether or not the money is being spent properly. I strongly believed in Texas, if you received State money, you ought to measure. The good news in the State of Maine is, the Governor agrees. You've got strong accountability in the State of Maine, and the Federal Government should in no way tell the folks in Maine how to devise an accountability system, and we don't intend to do so. We trust the local people. All we're saying is, "You develop a system so that no child is left behind." How do you know if you don't measure? How do you know if you don't hold people accountable? And how do you know how to correct problems unless you do measure?

And guess what happens in a system and States without accountability? Children whose parents may not speak English as a first language just get moved through the system. It's so much easier to quit on an inner-city child. And one of the reasons we've got to insist upon accountability and work with States to develop accountability systems is so that we're able to detect problems early and solve them before the system quits on children.

Too long we've gone without saying, "Each child matters." For too long we've asked a question in our society, "How old are you? Oh, if you're 10, we'll put you here, and if you're 14, we'll put you there." Instead, we've got to start asking the question, "What do you know?" And if you don't know what you're supposed to know, we'll make sure you do early, before it's too late.

Another priority of your President is to keep the peace. In order to do so, we must boost morale in our military, and it starts with making sure our soldiers and sailors are paid better. So the budget I submitted to the Congress increases the pay and improves the housing. But morale will also be improved by having a clear mission for our military. And the mission of our United States military must be: Prepare our troops to fight and win war and, therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place.

I believe strongly that, as the head of the executive branch, we owe it to the people and to the Congress to develop a strategic plan as to how best to spend the people's money when it comes to bolstering our defenses; that as its Chief Executive of Government, our responsibility is to develop a plan about what the military ought to not only look like today but what the military ought to look like 20 to 30 years from now, so that we can focus taxpayers' money in a responsible, planned way.

It is irresponsible to spend your money in a haphazard fashion. We must not have our defense budgets driven by politics. We must have them driven by vision and need, in order to not only effectively spend your money but in order to make sure we keep the peace 20 to 30 years from now. Military preparedness is a priority of our administration, and so is making sure we shepherd the taxpayers' money in a wise way.

Another priority is health care. The budget I submitted to the Congress doubles the Medicare budget—actually, more than doubles the Medicare budget. It says that Medicare is an important responsibility for our Government. But we also must be bold enough to reform Medicare. The Medicare system is ancient. It's meeting some needs but not all needs. And everybody, particularly those in the State of Maine, know loud and clear that Medicare does not provide prescription drugs for our seniors. It is time to seize the moment. It is time to provide our seniors a variety of options from which to choose, all of which will include prescription drugs.

I've heard all the talk about Social Security. You can imagine, particularly all those ads on TV that said, "If George Bush becomes the President, you're not going to get your Social Security check." Well, let me tell you, the budget I submitted to the Congress sets aside all the money that's supposed to go to Social Security for only one thing: Social Security.

We're going to have a debate on Social Security, as well. The debate about where payroll taxes goes is over. Now, some may decide to try to hyperventilate on the issue, but it's over. This Congress and this President are not going to allow payroll taxes to be spent on anything other than Social Security; that's for certain. And anybody who relies upon Social Security in your State need not worry. The people who need to worry are the younger workers. Those are the folks who need to worry, the folks that are coming up that are going to have to pay for the baby boomers, like me, when we retire. And so this debate may take a while, until the Congress finishes a lot of other business. But we need to have the debate about how to make sure the Social Security system is not only solvent today but is solvent when the baby boomers begin to retire. And I'm going to strongly suggest that one way to do so is to allow younger workers, at their choice, to take some of their own money and put it in the private markets.

So we've set priorities. We double the number of folks covered at community health centers. This is incredibly important programs. I hope you've got—I'm sure you've got some in Maine. They make an enormous difference for the indigent and the poor. So in my budget, we double the number of people served over the next 5-year period. We work with the Congress to make sure the NIH budget gets doubled by the year 2003, a commitment the Senators made so we could have adequate research to help cure disease in America. We set priorities, and we fund them.

There's a lot of debate in Washington about debt, and I'm concerned about debt, too. In the budget I submitted to the Congress, we pay down $2 trillion of debt. That's the biggest debt repayment in the history of the world. It's 2 trillion over 10 years. We pay down all the debt in a 10-year period that comes due.

And if you hear anybody in Washington talking about, "Well, let's pay down all the debt," it means they want the taxpayers to pay a premium on debt repayment. It

doesn't make any sense to pay down debt until it becomes due. Otherwise, taxpayers are going to have to pay a premium to do so. That doesn't make any common sense to me. It's not wise to try to accelerate debt repayment. It costs you too much money to do so. Let's pay down debt when it becomes available to be paid down. And that's what we do in this budget. So we set priorities and pay down debt.

Part of the hollering you're hearing out of Washington is the fact that my discretionary spending increases at 4 percent. And that's a lot, particularly since 4 percent is greater than the rate of inflation, and 4 percent is greater than the pay raise most working people have gotten in America. That's a big, healthy increase, particularly when you're talking in terms of billions.

But the reason why it's created some tension and friction in Washington is because it—last time around, they increased discretionary spending by 8 percent. All of a sudden, we've gotten a new Chief Executive in town that says, let's be fiscally responsible. Instead of increasing the size and scope of the Federal Government, instead of having a spending contest before we got out of town, let's be responsible with the people's money. Listen, 4 percent is plenty of growth with discretionary spending.

We also set aside $1 trillion for contingencies over a 10-year period. It could be money to help the farmer. It could be money to—who knows what it will be used for, but it's there.

Now, I know these numbers sound like a lot, but this is reality I'm talking about. We've increased discretionary spending by 4 percent; we pay down $2 trillion worth of debt; we set aside one trillion in the budget over a 10-year period for contingencies; and guess what? There's still money left over. And that's the debate. The fundamental question is what to do with it. And I start with this premise: The surplus, that leftover money, is not the Government's money; it's the people's money.

And I'll give you another premise. The best way I heard it the other day was in Council Bluffs, Iowa. A lady got up, and she said, "You know, Mr. President, I've been a mother and a grandmother, and I love to bake cookies. And every time I baked a plate of cookies and put them on the table, when my children and grandchildren went through the house, they always ate the cookies."

And that's how I kind of view tax money in Washington. If it's left on the plate—[*laughter*]—if we leave it on the platter, it's going to be spent. And so the fundamental debate is, once priorities are met, once we pay down debt, once we set aside money for contingencies, what do we do with it? Do we increase the size and scope of the Federal Government, or do we trust the people with their own money?

The last 4 months of—the first 4 months of the fiscal year, the cash coming into the Treasury was $40 billion, anticipated. This, in spite of the fact that the economy was beginning to slow down a little bit—40 billion more than projected. It sounds like, to me, that somebody is being overcharged. And so I submitted a plan to the United States Congress that remembers where the money came from, that helps with fiscal sanity in Washington, DC, a plan that will serve as a second wind to an ailing economy, a plan that says that everybody who pays taxes ought to get tax relief. It says to the Congress, trying to target tax relief is not fair. The role of the Congress and the role of the President is not to try to pick and choose who wins or loses when it comes to tax policy. If you pay taxes, you ought to get relief.

And so we've submitted a plan that does just that. It reduces all rates on everybody who pays taxes and shrinks the number of rates from 5 to 4. It increases the child credit from $500 to $1,000. And I want to talk about two aspects of the tax relief plan.

First, the code we have now is incredibly unfair to people who are struggling to get

ahead. And the example I've used over and over again is one I'm going to keep using until Congress solves the problem. And it's the single mother working hard as she can to raise two children. She's making $22,000 a year.

First of all, she's working the hardest job in America. Secondly, for every additional dollar she earns under this code, she pays a higher marginal rate than somebody who is successful in America; she begins to lose her earned-income tax credit; she gets put in the 15 percent bracket; she's paying payroll taxes.

Under this Tax Code, the people working on the fringes of the middle class, struggling hard to get ahead, pay a higher marginal rate than somebody who is successful. And that's not right. That's not what America is all about, as far as I am concerned.

America says, the harder you work, the more money you put in your pocket, and the easier it is to access the middle class. And we've got to change that, and so we dropped the bottom rate from 15 to 10 and increased the child credit from 500 to 1,000.

But I also believe strongly that we need to drop the top rate, as well. And I know there's a lot of talk about it in Washington, DC, and there's a lot of—by dropping the top rate, it creates all kinds of finger pointing and name calling. But I want Members of Congress to remember this fact about our Tax Code and about our economy and about the American Dream. There are thousands of small-business owners, thousands of entrepreneurs who are unincorporated in America, who are sole proprietors, who are Subchapter S's, that pay the highest marginal rate in the Tax Code. And when you drop the top rate from 39.6 percent to 33 percent, we're sending a clear signal that the role of Government is not to create wealth, but the role of Government is to create an environment in which the entrepreneur can flourish, in which the small business can grow to become a big business.

Our Government must understand: Tax relief will provide capital for the small-business owner to be able to expand. Our Government must hear loud and clear that by far, the vast majority of job creation comes from small businesses and entrepreneurs. And we always must remember, the great hope of America, the great dream of our country is for people to own their own business and own their own home, to be an owner in our country.

One of the things I'm going to do is fight for the entrepreneurial spirit in America. And one way to do so is to drop that top rate, to encourage capital formation in the private sector and in the hands of our small-business owners all across the country.

There are two other aspects of tax reform I want to talk about. First, our Tax Code sends the wrong signal about family. We penalize marriage. It makes no sense to do so. I look forward to working with the Congress to change the marriage penalty in the Tax Code. And we also do something else that's incredibly unfair. We tax people's assets twice, once when they're living and once when they die. And that's not right. It's not right for small-business owners; it's not right for Maine farmers, Texas ranchers. It's not right to have a death tax, and it's time to get rid of it.

I know these numbers sometimes sound just like they're a bunch of numbers and a lot of talk and balance sheets and throwing around zeros like it's common-day practice. And I understand that, so what I like to do is, I like to put a face on what I'm trying to talk about. I like to invite people who will be affected positively by my plans to—and I would like to introduce to you the Hanington family today. They're from way up East. You're way up there, right on the Canadian border. Willard is a small-business owner. It's a family-owned logging business. He brought his three children with him today. I want to talk about his circumstances right quick.

This good family, they're raising Kayla, who's 14, and Logan, who's 10, and Laci's 2½ years old. They work hard to get ahead. They pay $2,850 of Federal income taxes. And when Congress enacts the plan that I've submitted, this good family will save $2,150.

That's after we've grown the discretionary spending by 4 percent, after we've committed ourselves to saving Social Security and strengthening it, after we've doubled the Medicare budget, after we've provided for the military—there's money left over. And the fundamental question, folks, is who do you want spending that $2,150? That's what the debate is all about. And I submit to you, it's better for our country to trust this good man and his wife to spend their $2,150 than the Members of the United States Congress. [*Applause*] Thank you. I appreciate that.

And that's my budget, and that's my vision. It's based upon, who do you trust? I trust the people of this country. If you were in my position, you'd trust them, too. I travel—everywhere I go, the people of this country are fine and decent and honorable people.

The Governor and I and Senators and the Congressmen just came from the Salvation Army. It's a place based on something Government can't create, which is love and concern and deep compassion. No government can help. We can spend money, but we cannot put hope in the hearts of people. The great strength of this country comes as a result of people loving their neighbor and asking the fundamental question, "What can I do to help? What can I do to make my community a better place?"

Oh, this is a fabulous nation. That's why it's such an honor to be your President. I think we're making progress, not only on issues, but the culture is beginning to change some, in Washington, for the better. It's a culture of accomplishment, a culture of achievement.

Recently the Senate and the House moved a piece of legislation which I supported. I understand good folks may not agree. But there was excessive regulation getting ready to be placed on large and small businesses through what's called ergonomics. And the Congress and the Senate took a look at it and said, "The cost/benefits just doesn't make sense. Let's change it and come up with more realistic policy." The reason I bring that up is, it was a good, sound debate. Both Republicans and Democrats supported the measure. It made it to my desk; I signed it. But there's a sense of accomplishment, a sense of what we can do together for the good of the country that's beginning to become a part of the culture in Washington. There's a culture of respect developing in Washington.

I hope in my comments you understand that the Congressman may not agree with what I'm trying to do, and I may not necessarily agree with every vote, but I respect the man. And we need more of that in our Nation's Capital. We need to send the signal that good folks can disagree, that there is time for politics and there's time for doing what's right for the American people. And I'm going to continue to focus—[*applause*].

And finally, I hope that we're beginning to develop a culture of responsibility in the country. Those of us who hold high office, like your Governor, myself, and others, have a responsibility to the people, a responsibility to uphold the honor of the office. But that's just the beginning; that if we're blessed, we have the responsibility to help a neighbor in need; that we must send the signal to our children: Make the right choices, be responsible for the decisions you make in life.

No, I think we're making good progress. There's a lot of work to do, but it starts with trusting the people. And we're always remembering, the great strength of this land lies in the hard-working, good hearts of the American people.

Thank you for coming. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:18 p.m. at Merrill Auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Angus S. King, Jr., of Maine; Richard L. Bisson, Jr., chairman, Greater Portland Chambers of Commerce; and Mayor Cheryl Leeman of Portland, ME. S.J. Res. 6, approved March 20, was assigned Public Law No. 107–5.

Remarks at a Celebration of Greek Independence Day
March 23, 2001

Your Eminence, thank you very much, sir. It's always an honor to be in your presence. I think the last time we were together was at the church service right after I had the honor of being sworn in as the President. And I appreciate so very much you being there.

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Niotis, Ambassador Philon, Ambassador Marcoullis, Director Tenet, distinguished guests from Greece, as well as from America, welcome. This is a beautiful room to hold an important ceremony.

I want to thank you all for coming. I particularly want to thank Congressman Mike Bilirakis, as well as Senator Olympia Snowe, who is not with us today. I know where she is since I flew her up to Maine earlier. [*Laughter*] I want to thank you both for organizing the events. And it's interesting to note that I have been in your State and her State within the last week. All is well. [*Laughter*]

When I became President, I inherited the responsibility to safeguard one of America's oldest and most sacred friendships, that of the Government and people of the United States with the Government and people of Greece. We must keep that relationship vibrant, as it has been for 180 years.

It was 180 years ago that Greece proclaimed its independence—yet another example of Greece's contribution to the cause of human liberty. Few nations in the history of the world have done more to contribute to democratic self-government.

A Chinese scholar, hoping to foster an appreciation of Western thought in his country, recently translated the works of Homer into Chinese. He mastered ancient Greek in order to produce the most accurate translation possible and explained it this way: "If one wants to understand Western civilization, one has to search back to its roots, and the roots lead to ancient Greece."

Greek ideals had an enormous influence on the American Founders. James Madison, the Father of the Constitution, wrote this: "Among the confederacies of antiquity, the most considerable was that of the Grecian Republics."

We respect the ancient influence of Greece, and we value its modern friendships. Greece and America have been allies in the great 20th century struggles against nazism, Soviet communism, and Iraqi aggression. Our two nations are bound by history, by trade, by mutual respect, by common ideals, and one of the world's most important alliances.

We in the United States consider Greece to be a friend, a strong ally, and a powerful force for good in the world. And all the world will see this in vivid display when Athens hosts the Olympics of 2004. We're all looking forward to the great event.

I'm very pleased with the strong and expanding relationship between the United States and Greece. Our trade has increased by 16 percent in the last year. Tourism and high-level contacts between the United States and Greece have also increased.

I want you to know that the United States stands ready to help Greece and Turkey as they work to improve their relations. I'm also committed to a just and lasting settlement of the Cyprus dispute. My administration fully supports the U.N. Secretary-General's efforts to bring peace and prosperity to all Cypriots. Our goal is an early resumption of the U.N. process.

The greatest gifts of Greece, however, to this country are the immigrants it's sent, men and women who enrich our Nation with their spirit. They're the models of community and enterprise, of family, of education and public service. And we honor Greek independence. And as we honor Greek independence, I also want to honor the Greek contribution to our national character.

So it's my pleasure to welcome you, Your Eminence, our distinguished guests, to this celebration of Greek Independence Day.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:10 p.m. in the the Indian Treaty Room in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Archbishop Demetrios, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in America; Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Grigoris Niotis of Greece; Greek Ambassador to the United States Alexandros Philon; Cypriot Ambassador to the United States Erato Kozakou-Marcoullis; and United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan

March 23, 2001

President Bush. Good afternoon. It's my honor to welcome the Secretary-General to the Oval Office. My administration thinks he is doing an excellent job as the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and therefore, we heartily endorse his second term as the Secretary-General.

I appreciate your willingness to serve a second term, Mr. Secretary-General, and I'm looking forward to working not only to make sure that you serve a second term, but once that's done, work closely with you to keep the peace and to make the world more prosperous.

So, welcome.

Secretary-General Annan. Thank you very much. Mr. President, I'm also looking forward to working with you. And I'm very happy to be here. We have many issues to work on together, and I'm looking forward to our discussions this afternoon. We will go over a whole range of issues, including HIV/AIDS, poverty, the Balkans, and African issues.

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

Thank you all. Have a great weekend.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:50 p.m. on the South Grounds at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Situation in Macedonia
March 23, 2001

The United States joins its allies and the United Nations in strongly condemning the violence perpetrated by a small group of extremists determined to destabilize the democratic, multi-ethnic Government of Macedonia. The United States and its allies have a longstanding commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Macedonia.

The insurgents in Macedonia claim to be advancing the cause of the Albanian minority. They are not. In fact, their violent methods are hurting the long-term interests of ethnic Albanians in Macedonia, Kosovo, and throughout the region. We support instead those political leaders in Macedonia and the region who have rejected violence and terror in favor of democracy and dialog as a way to achieve political change.

I strongly support the efforts of President Trajkovski and the Macedonian Government to uphold democracy and the rule of law. We encourage the Government to act with restraint and to work closely with elected representatives of the Albanian community to address legitimate concerns, while taking the necessary steps to prevent further violence.

The United States is working with its allies and friends in the region to assist the Macedonian Government in countering the violence perpetrated by the extremists. We support NATO's effort to assess Macedonia's immediate security needs. We are already providing surveillance information to the Macedonian Government, and our Defense Department is dispatching Predator unmanned aerial vehicles to assist in this effort. KFOR patrols have been increased along Kosovo's border with Macedonia in order to improve border security and curtail the insurgents' activities.

Macedonia is a close friend, a partner country of NATO, and a successful example of a democratic, multi-ethnic state in the Balkans. As the United States knows only too well, perfecting such a state—and addressing the legitimate concerns of minorities—is a continuous process. It can only be done through dialog and democracy—and never through violence. That is why we call on all those who seek political change in Macedonia to work through the democratic political process.

NOTE: The statement referred to President Boris Trajkovski of Macedonia.

The President's Radio Address
March 24, 2001

Good morning. Just over 2 weeks ago, the House of Representatives passed a large part of my tax relief plan. Now the House is about to vote on my budget, the funding we provide for the needs and goals of our Government. I have sent the Congress a budget plan that reflects our values as a people.

My budget is compassionate. It dedicates $238 billion to Medicare next year alone, enough to fund all current programs and to begin a new prescription drug benefit for low-income seniors. It protects all 2.6 trillion of the Social Security surplus for Social Security and for Social Security alone. It increases spending on education substantially. It provides tax credits to help

low-income people buy health insurance. It adds funding for medical research, and it gives our men and women in uniform a $1 billion pay increase.

My budget is also responsible. It pays down the national debt faster than any country has ever repaid its debt before. It establishes a contingency fund for unexpected needs, and it provides a reasonable 4 percent increase in discretionary Government spending; that is, 4 percent after we have paid every promised dime for Social Security and Medicare. Then, after meeting all these priorities, we return about $1 out of every 4 in the surplus to the American taxpayer.

Some in Washington do not think a 4 percent spending increase is enough. They want Government to take a much larger part of the surplus. But think about it. For the past few years, average hourly wages have risen at a rate of about 4 percent. If the taxpayer can get by on a 4 percent raise, the tax collector ought to be able to make do with 4 percent, as well.

There's a lot at stake here. Last year Federal discretionary spending grew at a massive 8 percent. If this spending spree were to continue, we would drain the surplus by funding a permanently larger Government. This would be bad for the taxpayer and bad for the economy. It would make significant debt reduction and tax relief much more difficult.

My budget plan doesn't slam the brake on spending; it slows the growth of spending. It makes our increases in spending more realistic and reasonable. All in all, my budget will provide the Government with 100 billion more to spend in 2002. Even by Washington standards, this is a lot of additional money, and it is enough.

This debate illustrates a point I've been making for a while: When money is left in Washington, there is a tremendous temptation for the Government to use it. The point is simple: If you send it, they will spend it. And this is why we need a balanced approach of moderate spending growth, debt reduction, and meaningful tax relief.

This is the plan the Congress is now considering, and I hope you'll give it your support.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 3:22 p.m. on March 23 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on March 24. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 23 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Exchange With Reporters in Kansas City, Missouri
March 26, 2001

National Economy

Q. Are we in the middle of an economic downturn?

The President. We'll let the numbers speak for themselves. I'm concerned about our economy. I'm confident, however, if we do the right things, we can have economic growth, the likes of which we've had in the past. We'll watch the numbers carefully. The numbers will speak the truth.

The last quarter of last year was a very slow growth quarter, and we'll see how it is in the first quarter of this year. I think a lot of experts believe that it's going to be slow.

Q. Do you believe in Ari's formulation, that we're in the middle of an economic downturn?

The President. Pardon me?

Q. Do you agree with your spokesman's formulation, that we're in the middle of a downturn?

The President. It has slowed down, and we better do something about it. And that's one of the reasons I'm here in Kansas City, to talk about tax relief as part of an economic stimulus package. And by the way, you looked very sharp the other night. Where did you rent it? [*Laughter*]

Airline Labor Disputes

Q. Mr. President, are you going to intervene in the Comair strike?

The President. The National Mediation Board did not make—did not rule. In other words, they did not give me the right to move in on the strike. Therefore, the parties are going to have to settle it themselves.

Q. Are you still determined to prevent a season of airline strikes, sir?

The President. I am worried about what the airline shutdowns could do to the economy. I would urge that all parties come to quick resolution on the matters that—you know, on the table. Yes, I'm concerned about what airline strikes could do.

Q. But your hands are tied in this case?

The President. In this case they are, as you know.

Thank you.

NOTE: The exchange began at 10:49 a.m. at the First Watch Restaurant. A reporter referred to Press Secretary Ari Fleischer. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks to Employees of Bajan Industries in Kansas City
March 26, 2001

Elson, thank you very much for your hospitality. It was interesting, you said the name of this company is a reflection of his heritage, and that's true. But this company is also a reflection of the American Dream, as well. And I'm so thankful for the invitation to be here. I'm also thankful for your willingness to dream and to create jobs. This is what America is all about. This is what I call the lifeblood of the country.

I also took notice of the fact that you were quick to introduce your wife. [*Laughter*] Smart man. [*Laughter*] But I'm so thankful for you all to let us come. Senator, thank you very much for traveling with me. I appreciate Senator Bond's leadership. I believe he's got his priorities absolutely straight, and they include the people of—they include the good people of Missouri, right at the top of the list. And I appreciate being able to call him an ally.

Earlier today I was proud to travel with a newly elected Congressman, Sam Graves. We went to his district to say hello to folks in the district. And Sam, thank you for your willingness to serve. It's good to see Congresswoman Karen McCarthy. Thank you for your hospitality, Karen. And Congressman Dennis Moore—I've had a chance to visit with Dennis in the past, and I appreciate him at least giving me a chance to make my case. [*Laughter*] Mayor, thank you very much for your hospitality. Thanks for greeting me here today.

I want to talk about a subject that's on my mind—part of my job is to put it on your mind if it's not—and that's how to make sure we treat your money wisely in Washington and what do we do if we have any of it left over. First, let me talk about budgeting. Elson has to budget, and his plant manager has to budget. And one of the key components of budgeting is to set

priorities. We're in Washington; sometimes there are no clear priorities. You have to prioritize with the people's money, and we have set priorities in my budget.

A major priority is education. The biggest increase of any department is in the Department of Education. But I also want you to know, even though we're asking for more money to be spent in Washington, I'm not asking for more power. As a matter of fact, I want there to be less power in Washington, because I strongly believe in local control of schools. I believe that Washington ought to trust the local people to make the right decision for the schools. People closest to the problem are those best able to address—[*applause*].

You've heard a lot about some issues that relate to schools in this area. Don't be looking for Washington for the solutions. We may be able to help with some funding, but the government that is closest to the people is that more likely to be able to address problems. And as a former Governor, I understand one size does not fit all when it comes to education. The issues between Texas and Missouri are different, and they darn sure were different within my own State. And so we need more flexibility at the local level, less power in Washington.

But I also believe in results. I know Elson believes in results. He's a results-oriented man. And I believe public policy ought to be results-oriented. So my attitude is, if we increase spending at the Federal level and align authority and responsibility at the local level, we also ought to ask the question, what are the results? We ought to say to local school districts, "If you receive Federal help, you measure and you show us whether or not children are learning to read and write and add and subtract, so that we know—so that we know—whether school systems are quitting early on children."

And I've seen what happens when school systems quit early on children. Guess who gets quit on: children whose parents may not speak English as their first language, inner-city children. And to me it makes sense that if you receive help, you've got to measure.

I don't want there to be a Federal test. I don't want the National Government to undermine local control of schools. But I do think society ought to ask the question, are the children learning? And if they are, we ought to applaud and thank principals and teachers. But if not, we ought to correct the problem early, before it's too late. It's time for a new attitude when it comes to the education of our children, particularly starting in Washington, DC.

And I think we're making good progress. There's a new spirit of accomplishment in Washington, DC. And I think we're making good progress on an education bill. Both Republicans and Democrats are coming together to adhere to a set of principles that will encourage educational excellence.

Another priority of mine, of course, is how best to keep the peace. And so part of my budget was to ask Congress to spend more money on the men and women who wear the uniform, to increase the salaries of our troops and to make sure they're housed better. I'm worried about morale in the military. And one good way to start rebuilding morale is to pay people better, and that's exactly what we're going to do.

But I also have the responsibility of laying out a strategic plan for the military, for how best to spend the taxpayers' money beyond pay increases. We have the responsibility in the executive branch to take a full review of where money ought to be spent in the future, so we can better keep the peace. Before we ask Congress to spend money on weapons systems, our view is, let's make sure the weapons systems are needed. As we think about research and development money, let's make sure it fits into a strategic plan so that the United States can keep the peace not only today but 20 to 30 years from now.

Another priority is health care. And we've got a lot of money in my budget

for health care. We double the money for Medicare. We double the amount of folks who will be served at community health centers. We provide money in the budget to help the working uninsured be able to purchase insurance. We focus on health care.

And we also do something else in the budget—and I know there's a lot of talk, and there's a lot of ways to justify keeping your money in Washington. But one of the old ways of justifying keeping your money in Washington is—has left. It's no longer relevant—some may continue to try to frighten people with it—and that's the issue of Social Security. We're taking all the payroll taxes and dedicating them only to one thing, and that's Social Security. The day of trying to frighten seniors in America to be against something is over with.

This is a budget that sets priorities: Defense is a priority; education is a priority; health care is a priority. I readily concede we don't try to be all things to all people in our budget, however, but we do increase discretionary spending by 4 percent. And this creates the rub in Washington. There are some who think 4 percent is too small. I can understand why, because during the last budget cycle the Congress spent—raised the discretionary spending by 8 percent.

Now, remember, inflation is less than 4 percent. Most people aren't getting 4 percent pay raises, and yet asking our Government to live on a 4 percent increase in discretionary spending has created some tension. It made people nervous, has created all kinds of noise in Washington.

But I think it's realistic to ask the Federal Government to keep its spending at a rate a little more than the rate of inflation. I think that's a realistic expectation, and it shouldn't surprise any of you all. I said, "If you give me the chance to be the President, I'll work to be fiscally responsible with your money." The days of spending orgies in order to get people out of town are over with, as far as I'm concerned. I'm going to set priorities and strictly make sure that your money is spent wisely and that we don't have a bidding contest in Washington, DC.

We've also paid down a lot of debt. There's a lot of discussion about debt at the national level, and ours is a budget that pays down $2 trillion worth of debt. Now, there are some who may want to pay off more debt. But the 2 trillion is the only amount that's coming due over the next 10 years, and it doesn't make much sense to pay down debt prematurely. It will cost the taxpayers additional money to do so.

I guess what I'm trying to say is, I've taken a commonsense approach to your money. We've set priorities. We've increased the budget by 4 percent. Admittedly, it's not 8 percent, but 4 percent's plenty for the Federal Government to live on. We pay down $2 trillion of debt. Incredibly enough, we also set aside one trillion more dollars, over 10 years, for a contingency. But you know what, there's still money left over—about $1.6 trillion. And that's where the big debate—that's what we're talking about, what to do with the money.

I start with this premise, that that surplus is not the Government's money. It's the hard-working people's money. It's the money of the entrepreneur. It's the hard-working—it's the people's money; that's whose money it is. And as we're thinking about what to do with it, I hope the Congress always remembers whose money it is.

I love the idea we're going to give the people their money back. You know, I say that myself sometimes. I just don't think we ought to take it in the first place. After we meet priorities, I think we ought to let you have it. So I've submitted a tax relief plan. The debate no longer is whether or not we're going to have tax relief. It is how much money is going to be passed back to the people and how quickly. And

that's a good sign for the hard-working Americans who are paying taxes.

I'd like to explain some of the principles of the tax relief plan. First of all, you hear a lot of talk about targeted tax relief. Those words basically mean that Congress gets to pick and choose who gets tax relief and who doesn't get tax relief. But that is not my vision of fair Government. Our vision of Government says that if you pay taxes, you ought to get relief, that the idea of trying to pick and choose who does and who doesn't isn't right. So we lower all rates for everybody who pays taxes. The largest percentage tax relief goes to the folks at the bottom end of the economic ladder.

We understand—or I understand, and proponents of my plan understand, that if you're on the outskirts of poverty, struggling to get ahead, the Tax Code is incredibly unfair. It's unfair because as some taxpayers make more money, they pay a higher marginal rate than successful people do. If you start losing your earned-income tax credit and you go into the 15 percent bracket for the first time, and you pay payroll taxes, the marginal rate on every additional dollar you earn is higher than somebody making $200,000. That's the current Tax Code today, and that's not right.

One of the major principles in the tax relief plan says, the harder you work, the more money you ought to be able to make and keep; the harder you work, the more money you ought to have in your pocket. And so this is a plan that recognizes the code is unfair. That's why we drop the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent and increase the child credit from $500 to $1,000 per child.

We also drop the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent. And this is where some of the folks in Washington would rather holler than listen to the facts. It's easier to say some things about, maybe certain folks shouldn't be getting tax relief. But I want people to understand this about dropping the top rate. A major beneficiary of dropping the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent are small-business owners. Thousands of small businesses pay taxes at the top personal rate. The limited liability corporation, just like this company, pays taxes at the high personal rate. The unincorporated small-business owner pays taxes at the high personal rate. The sole proprietor pays taxes at the high personal rate.

Elson, you'll be pleased to hear, I hope, that I believe the role of Government is not to create wealth but an environment in which the entrepreneur can flourish. And one way to do so is to provide meaningful tax relief for the unincorporated businesses all across America. By dropping the top rate, we're enhancing the cashflow of the major new job creators in the country. I've come to this plant—[*applause*].

Oh, I've heard the rhetoric, but the reality is, the Elson Seale of the world—his company benefits, which makes it easier for him to employ the good folks he's employing here. Tax relief for small businesses is vitally important. It's vitally important to make sure that the entrepreneurial—the entrepreneurial spirit flourishes in America. It's also vitally important as our economy slows down.

We've got to remember who the major job creators are. New jobs are created by small-business people and entrepreneurs, and we should not let the rhetoric of a few in Washington cloud the issue. And the issue is, how do we get more money into the coffers of the small businesses like Elson's in America? And that's what this tax relief plan does.

So when you hear them saying they're against dropping the top rate, you can translate that to the people saying, "We just don't appreciate entrepreneurship or the small-business creation in this country."

There's two other issues I want to talk about. One is that the marriage penalty is unfair. It's an unfair part of our Tax Code. And I urge the House and ultimately the Senate to do something about that.

And I tell you something else unfair in our Tax Code, the death tax. That's unfair. I think Elson ought to be allowed to pass his business from one generation to the next without being taxed twice. I don't know what your plans are to do with your business, and I'm not going to get you to declare right now—[*laughter*]—particularly in front of your son and daughter, but I do know that if part of your dream is to pass your asset base on to your kin, you ought to be allowed to do so. He pays taxes during—when he makes money; that's one time. Why should he pay taxes on his death? It doesn't seem to make sense to me. If part of the American experience is realizing a dream and building up your own asset base, an equally important part of that is passing your asset base on to your kin, to your son or your daughter. It's part of the American Dream. It's time to get rid of the death tax in the Tax Code.

Not only does today give me a chance to talk about the benefits for a company like Elson's, I'd like to introduce some folks that I got to meet at a restaurant over there, the Edwards family. Robert's a manager at Bob Evans Restaurant, and Jennifer's an accountant at a real estate firm. They've got Quentin and Ian with them. Quentin is 3½; Ian is barely hanging on at one—[*laughter*]—looking for a nap. Mom probably is, too, right about now. [*Laughter*] The reason I asked them to come, because I want to just describe their circumstances quickly. This good family works hard. They pay $1,750 in Federal income taxes. And under the plan, when fully implemented, if Congress passes it, they'll end up paying no Federal income tax. They'll end up saving $1,750. And I've asked them to come because it gives me a chance to vividly make this point, and it's this: Once the Government has met its basic needs and we've grown the discretionary budget by 4 percent and paid down $2 trillion of debt, set aside a trillion for contingencies, what do we do? I would much rather have these good folks spend the $1,750 than the Congress. In all due respect, I think we ought to trust these people with their money. It is your money to begin with.

And that's the fundamental debate, and that's the debate that's going to take place. It's taking place in the House. It's going to take place in the Senate. Who do we trust? This debate, as far as I'm concerned, is a matter of trust. Do we trust the Elson Seales of the world, or do we trust the Government to make the decisions? Once priorities are met, once we have increased discretionary spending, once we have made sure Social Security is safe, once we have doubled Medicare, who do we trust with the people's money? Ask the people.

I would much rather have this man and his wife making the decisions what to do with that $1,750 than the appropriators in the United States Senate and the United States House. And that's the issue during this campaign—and that's the issue during this debate.

And so if you like what you heard, I urge you to use the old e-mail—[*laughter*]—or the telephone or the letter. It's amazing how effective people can be when it comes to convincing their elected officials to listen to a different point of view.

I'm honored to be able to come out and make my case. It's important for me to get out of the Nation's Capital and get in front of as many people as I can. Sometimes the filter may not say it exactly the way I'd like it to be said, if you know what I mean. [*Laughter*] Sometimes the message doesn't get delivered directly, and this gives me a chance to do so. It gives me a chance to say that ours is a plan that meets priorities but doesn't want to grow the size of the Federal Government relative to the size of people's pocketbooks.

There's a lot of talk about debt at the national level. I urge the Senators and the Congress to remember, there's a lot of debt at the personal level, too. And there's a lot of talk about, oh, this assumption, that assumption. But one thing we're certain of

is that energy bills are going up for people. We're certain of that. And at the very minimum, we ought to share some of the people's—not take the people's money in the first place, so they can manage their new energy account—their increased energy accounts.

Now, we need to hear the people of this country. We need to listen to them. We need to understand the entrepreneurial spirit. We need to trust families with their own money, because the true strength of the country lies in the hearts and souls of the American people. That's the great strength of this country. The great strength of the country happens when a neighbor turns to a neighbor in need and says, "What can I do to help? Brother, you got a problem; what can I do to help?"—acts of kindness that take place on a daily basis.

No, the true strength of the country is when somebody says, "I think I want to teach some values to a child," and becomes a Boy Scout or Girl Scout leader or Boys or Girls Club leader. The true strength of the country comes when a mother or dad understands their most important job is not what they're doing during the day, but loving—if they happen to have a child—loving their children with all their heart and all their soul. That's the true strength of this country.

I know we've lost some wealth in the stock market recently, but the real wealth of America is the creative energy of our folks. And tax policy ought to unleash the creative energy of Americans and trust Americans with their own money. I'd like your help. I'd like your help. This isn't for me. This isn't help for a political party. This is help for doing what's right for America. This is important for our economy, but it's also important for the families and hard-working people all across the country. And we can afford it.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:50 a.m. in the factory. In his remarks, he referred to Elson Seale, owner, Bajan Industries, LLC, his wife, Delores, and their children Jamal and Janine; and Mayor Kay Barnes of Kansas City.

Remarks at the Tractor Supply Company and an Exchange With Reporters in Billings, Montana
March 26, 2001

The President. I want to thank—Fred, thank you for having me, and I want to thank you all for coming. I look forward to talking about American agriculture with you. The issues that relate directly to Montana farmers and ranchers are issues that relate to Texas farmers and ranchers, too. Agriculture is an incredibly important part of our Nation's economy.

I'm going to tell you a couple of things; then I'm going to listen. But I am going to tell you that when it comes to negotiations and trade agreements, we will treat agriculture as an important, integral part of our strategy. We won't kind of hold agriculture out and then maybe try to get a good deal or not. Agriculture is an important part of our country's economic future.

Secondly, I'm—we'll have regulations based upon sound science.

Thirdly, I'm worried about energy; I know you all are, as well. Energy is driving up the cost of farming. It's not only driving up the cost of, obviously, what it takes to run your vehicles; it also drives up the cost of fertilizer. And I understand that.

And fourthly, I look forward to discussing with you some of the conversations I've

had with our Canadian friends to the north, in regards to labeling and wheat policy and timber policy as well.

So I'm honored that you all gave me a chance to come by and visit. It's my first time I've ever been to the State of Montana. But I suspect I'm going to find—good folks here in this State are kind of like the folks where I came from, hard-working, God-fearing, family-loving people who are worried about how to make a living in the agriculture sector. Thank you all for giving me a chance to be here.

Agricultural Assistance

Q. Mr. President, do you see a need for a farm rescue package along the—[*inaudible*]—of last year's?

The President. It's too early to tell, but we've got contingency money set aside. We've got contingency money set aside in case that needs to happen.

Q. And do you see a need for a permanent change in the farm—[*inaudible*]?

The President. It's too early to tell. What we don't know yet is whether or not the new risk management programs that have been put in place achieve their desired effect.

Montana Drought

Q. Montana farmers are worried about drought, Mr. President. What can you do to help them?

The President. Pray. Pray for rain. [*Laughter*] We have just come through a tough drought in my State of Texas, and I understand what drought does to a farmer. The only thing we can do is hope moisture comes, and we've got to call upon the good Lord.

In the meantime, we've got disaster payments and risk management programs at the Federal level.

Thank you.

Treasury Secretary Paul H. O'Neill

Q. Mr. President, can you tell us what led Mr. O'Neill to go ahead and give his stock options back?

The President. You need to talk to Mr. O'Neill.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:08 p.m. in the warehouse. In his remarks, he referred to Fred Booth, Presidential designee to head the Montana office of the Farm Service Agency. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to the Community in Billings
March 26, 2001

Thank you all. This is my first time in your beautiful State, and I want to thank you for the warm welcome.

Before I begin and say the thanks, I do want you all to join me in a moment of silent prayer for the two soldiers, men who wore the uniform of America, who lost their lives in Germany today, and two of our pilots who are missing over Great Britain. Would you please join me in a moment of silent prayer, please?

[*A moment of silence was observed.*]

Thank you. God bless them. God bless their families, and God bless America.

I first want to say thanks to my friend, your former Governor. It seems like you still remember who he is. I, of course, know who he is. I had no stronger ally, a good man, as you know and, gosh, maybe one of these days we might convince him to get his political uniform back on.

I appreciate so very much getting to know your current Governor. The first time I met her was at the White House. We had a pretty fancy dinner. It was the first

fancy dinner we had at the White House. I invited all the Governors over, and she came and did just fine, I want you to know. [*Laughter*] Now, her husband, on the other hand—[*laughter*]—I don't know where he rented his tux, but he looked quite handsome. At any rate, it was an honor to know your Governor. People say the kindest things about her. She's a good, strong leader, and I know you're proud to call her Governor—and proud to call the Lieutenant Governor, Lieutenant Governor. I want to thank them both for being up here today. Thank you all for coming.

I'm particularly proud to be here with the Montana congressional delegation, fine Americans—fine Americans all, starting with the senior member of the delegation, the senior Senator, who is a man who's got enormous power in Washington. He's the kind of man who has got enough power that if he likes what I have to say and you like what I have to say, I'm confident he'll get it done. We're counting on you.

And I flew into town today with Senator Burns, a man who is not a very shy, retiring fellow. [*Laughter*] After all, he was an auctioneer. But I'm looking forward to having his vote when these bills start hitting the floor. He looked in, and there we were, about 35,000 feet, and he said, "President, you're doing the right thing."

And we already know how this man is going to vote. We've had a couple of tough votes on the floor of the House, and Congressman, thank you for your strong support. You did the right thing for the people in Montana.

I want to talk a little bit about the budget. There's a lot of talk about the budget, and I found it's much better for me to take my case directly to the people. Sometimes the word coming out of Washington gets filtered. Sometimes it's hard to get a direct message to the people. So I found the best way to get the message out is to travel the country. And it's pretty healthy to do so, too. Sometimes some of us in Washington forget where we come from, and that's why it's good for the President to get out and remind people of who matters. And the people that matter are the hard-working people of America who pay this Nation's bills, that's who matters.

I'd like people to know my perspective of how we're going to spend your money. I'd like to characterize it as a commonsense way of spending the people's money, which means we start with priorities. Anytime you set a budget, it's important to set priorities. I'd like to explain a couple of the priorities in my budget.

Education is a priority in my budget. Our education budget—the Department of Education received the largest increase of any Department in our budget request to the Congress. It's one thing to ask for more money, but it's always important to remember where you come from.

I used to be the Governor of a great State. I used to—there you are. [*Laughter*] You obviously are not checking passports at the border. [*Laughter*] Thank you for waving those flags. And the reason I said that is because I remember how I really didn't like all the Federal rules and strings, the Federal Government centralized authority telling the people how to run the school system. That's why we're asking for more money. We're also asking Congress to free up local folks to make the right decisions for the children. The people who care more about the children in Montana are the citizens of Montana.

One size doesn't fit all when it comes to educating our Nation's children. So, on the one hand, we're asking for more money; on the other hand, we're asking for power to be passed out of Washington, DC, with as much flexibility and authority so the good Governor and Lieutenant Governor and legislators and school board officials can help chart the path of excellence for every child.

But in our budget and in our plans for education reform, we also ask this: We ask that in return for getting help, that you, the people of Montana, or the people of

any State, develop an accountability system that says to the good taxpayers, "Our children are learning," an accountability system that will tell us whether or not progress is being made.

See, I think it's important for us to be a results-oriented nation, a nation that measures progress, and as importantly, a nation that determines whether children need help early, before it's too late. Our mission in America is to make sure that we reform schools where reform is needed, so that not one child in America is left behind as we go into the 21st century.

I mentioned the military, and one of our priorities in this administration is to strengthen the military; it's to lift the morale of the military. And so in my budget, we ask Congress to increase the pay for the men and women who wear the uniform, to make sure they're better paid and better housed. A priority is a strong military. But it's one thing to spend more money. It's also important to have a Commander in Chief who sets a clear mission for the military of the United States. And the mission is this: Be prepared to fight and win war and, therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place.

There are new threats that face our Nation. Ours will be an administration that is realistic, that brings common sense to our foreign policy. We'll address the threats as we see them. I'm concerned about rogue nations and leaders that may try to hold the United States or our allies hostage.

Not only must we make sure that our men and women are trained well; we must make sure we have the equipment necessary to keep the peace, the research and development to make sure we have the systems that says to those who may try to hold our Nation hostage, "Don't try it. Don't dare." We need a missile defense system that prevents the world from being held hostage by terrorism.

The budget we've submitted to the Congress doubles the Medicare budget over a 10-year period of time. It also increases the number of folks who will be served at community health centers. It provides money for the working uninsured, so they can buy health insurance. No, we focus on the health care of the citizens of this country.

The budget I submitted ends, for once and for all, the old, tired, stale political rhetoric that says somebody like Bush is going to come along and affect the Social Security of our Nation's seniors, the old scare tactics politics that for too long has dominated the political scene. I hope, once and for all, Republicans and Democrats will quit all this business about trying to frighten people, because in the budget I submitted to the Congress, it sets aside all the money aimed for payroll taxes for only one thing, social—I mean, all the money from payroll taxes aimed for Social Security, for only one thing and one thing only, Social Security.

No, I know, there are some who want to keep all your money in Washington, and they'll say what they have to say to do so. But don't get fooled by this rhetoric about Social Security being threatened. Those days are over with—those days are over with. Those who need to worry about Social Security are not those who rely on Social Security today or those near retirement. The folks that better hope we have a Congress and a President who's willing to think differently on Social Security are the younger workers who are going to have to pay for us baby boomers when we retire.

The debate will happen later on in the year, but I'm going to have Congress take a hard look at letting younger workers take their own money and manage it in the safety of managed savings accounts, investment accounts. Those are our priorities.

Paying off debt is a priority. In the budget I submitted to the United States Congress, we pay down $2 trillion worth of our debt. In a 10-year period, we pay down 2 trillion. People say, "Why not more?" Well, because we'd have to pay a premium to pay down any more debt. That's all the

debt that's coming up to be paid off in a 10-year period. It makes no sense, certainly not any common sense, to pay a premium for debt that hasn't come due yet. So this administration isn't going to do that, but we do pay down $2 trillion of debt. It's a significant payment down of our Nation's debt. We set priorities, and we pay down debt.

But part of the problem is that I only grow discretionary spending by 4 percent. Now, by the way, 4 percent is greater than the rate of inflation; 4 percent is a bigger increase than most people's paycheck increased. Surely, Congress can keep the spending down to 4 percent. It's going to require a new mentality, though, you see, because discretionary spending at the end of last year increased by 8 percent.

It's like they had a bidding contest to see how—the guy who spent the most got out of town first. And that's not the right way to deal with your money. We need fiscal sanity in Washington, DC. We need to set priorities. We need to make sure that we don't overgrow the Federal budget.

And by bringing fiscal discipline to Washington, by having the discretionary budget that increases at 4 percent, not at 8 percent, there's money left over. And the big debate is what to do with it. Now by the way, before I tell you what I think we ought to do with it, before I tell you what we think we ought to do, I want to also tell you that within our budget, over a 10-year period there's $1 trillion for contingencies.

So, set priorities; set aside payroll taxes for Social Security; we double the Medicare budget; we increase discretionary spending at 4 percent; we set aside money for contingencies. One contingency may be a continuing problem in our agricultural sector. There's money set aside for contingencies. There's still money left over, and that's where the clash of wills is coming in Washington, DC.

Let me tell you the principles that I made my decision. First of all, that money left over—we call it the surplus—that money is not the Government's money; it is the people's money. The Government didn't earn that money; you earned the money.

In the first 4 months of this year, the cashflow coming into the Treasury exceeded expectations by $40 billion, in spite of the fact that our economy has been sputtering a little bit. During the first 4 months of the fiscal year, $40 billion excess cash came in. It sounds like, to me, somebody is being overcharged. And we need to ask for a refund.

And that's what I'm here to talk about. I'm here to talk about the tax relief plan that I have submitted to the United States Congress. It starts with this. It says, let's reduce all rates.

I know there are some in Washington who like to talk about what they call targeted tax cuts. Let me tell you what that means. That means that the folks in Washington get to decide who the winners are and who doesn't win when it comes to tax relief.

That's not our view of Government, folks. Our view of Government says, if you pay taxes, you ought to get relief. We simplify the code. We try to make this cumbersome Tax Code easier for folks to understand.

This Tax Code of ours is patently unfair. It's unfair to people at the bottom end of the economic ladder. If you're a single mom in the State of Montana, trying to raise two children—by the way, you'd be working the toughest job in the State of Montana, the toughest job. If you're on the edge of poverty, if you're working hard and you're making $22,000 a year, under this Tax Code, incredibly enough, for every additional dollar that hard-working woman makes, she pays a higher marginal rate on that dollar than someone who is successful. Under the Tax Code today, for every additional dollar the single mom making $22,000 a year earns above $22,000, she pays a higher marginal rate on that dollar than someone making $200,000 a year. And

that's not right. That's not the vision we have for America. So I'm asking Congress to drop the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent and increase the child credit from $500 to $1,000 per child. I think everybody pretty much agrees with that.

Let me tell you something; let me tell you something else. I'm advocating dropping the top rate, as well, from 39.6 percent to 33 percent, and let me tell you why. Oh, I've heard all the rhetoric; you've heard it, too. You know, "This is a plan only the wealthy people benefit." I want to remind the people all across America that there are thousands of small-business owners who are unincorporated in America who pay the 39.6 percent rate. I want to remind people that there are hundreds of thousands of sole proprietors in our country who are working hard every single day to realize the American Dream of starting their own business, of employing people, who pay at the high rates in our Tax Code.

No, we've heard all the rhetoric. But the truth of the matter is, the role of Government is not to create wealth but an environment in which the entrepreneur and small-business owner can flourish in America. And dropping that top rate sends a clear signal: We want you to have more cashflow so you can expand your business when this economy is slowing down; we want you to have more money in your pocket so you can continue to employ more hard-working people in the great land of America.

The marriage penalty is unfair in our Tax Code. It doesn't make sense to tax marriage disproportionally to those folks who aren't married. That's not right. We ought to encourage families to stay together. We ought to have a Tax Code that welcomes families.

I had the honor of meeting with some farmers and ranchers from your good State. And it leads me to my final point on tax fairness and tax relief. The death tax is unfair. It's unfair to ranchers; it's unfair to farmers; it's unfair to the family business owner that works his or her heart out to be able—and wants to leave it to a family member. It's not right, folks. It's not right to tax a person's assets twice. It's time to get rid of the death tax in this Tax Code.

You've heard them all over there. They say, "This isn't enough." We've got some people that are saying, "Let's make it bigger," and some people saying, "Let's make it smaller." Our message we've got to send the United States Congress is, the plan I've laid out is just right. It's just right for the small-business owner. It's just right for the person struggling to get ahead in America. It's just right for the rancher and farmer. It's just right.

And let me tell you another reason why we need tax relief. I was in Council Bluffs, Iowa, and a grandmother stood up, and she said, "You know, Mr. President"—behave yourself—[*laughter*]—she didn't say, "Behave yourself." She said, "Mr. President," she said, "I baked a lot of cookies in my day." She was talking about the budget and money in Washington. She said, "I baked a lot of cookies in my day. And I've seen children and grandchildren go through my house more times than you can possibly imagine. And every time I left cookies on the plate on the table, they were eaten." That's how I feel about your money in Washington. It's a fundamental difference about, once we meet priorities, who gets the money? Where does the money go?

Today I've asked the Palmers—there they go, right over there where it says, "Tax Relief Now." That's Mike Palmer; that's Kathy Palmer; that's Joe Palmer and Jacob Palmer. And I want to thank you all for coming. Mike works for the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad. Kathy is a teller at Wells Fargo Bank. Joseph is 12, and Jacob is 9. This good family, they pay $2,900 in Federal income taxes. Once Congress puts the plan I've just described to you in place, these good folks will save $1,700. That's not a lot for some, they say. It's a lot for them. It's 1,700 more dollars in their pocket.

You know, there's a lot of talk about national debt. I want people to remember in Congress, there's also debt at the private level. There's a lot of folks who have got credit card debt. They thought they could manage the debt okay, until the fact that our Nation didn't have an energy policy caught up with us. People's energy bills are going up. People are having trouble making ends meet in America.

We've met priorities. We've got money left over. And the fundamental question is, do you want the Palmers to spend the money, or the Government? I want the Palmers to spend the $1,700.

This is a matter of trust. It's a matter of trust. Who do you trust with that extra money? Who do you want to spend it? That's the question I'm asking the Members of the Senate and the House of Representatives, and the question I hope you join me in asking. Once we've met priorities, once we've paid down debt, I want to trust the Palmers and the hard-working Americans. It's your money to begin with. It's not the Government's money we're talking about; it's the people's money.

And it's so important to trust the people of this country. It's so important to trust our fellow Americans. The strength of the country is in the hearts and souls of our citizens. That's the strength of America. It doesn't lie in our halls of Government. And we have a great form of government. But the true strength of America is in our citizenry and our neighborhoods, where somebody puts an arm around a neighbor in need and says, "Brother or sister, what can I do to help?" No, the great strength of this country is because good-hearted citizens say, "I want to teach a child some values and become a Boy Scout or a Girl Scout leader or a Boys and Girls Club leader." The true strength of the country is in our churches and synagogues and mosques, places of worship that teach us—that teach the scholar lessons.

I trust the people of this country. That's what makes our Nation unique and strong and compassionate. The best thing I can do besides arguing for good public policy and to sign good law is to begin by changing the culture in Washington, by working to establish a culture of respect.

It's important for the rhetoric in Washington, DC, to be dialed down a couple of notches—that needless partisanship that goes on. We ought to be talking about the people of the country. We need to be talking about disagreeing in an agreeable way. There's a time for politics. Thankfully, we finished that. Now it's a time for good public policy. And a good public policy always begins by trusting the people and listening to the people and remember whose money we're spending when it comes to setting the budgets of the Federal Government.

We have a solemn obligation in Washington to do the people's business. So I believe we're beginning to develop a culture of accomplishment in Washington, as well. I was pleased to sign a bill that would have—that got rid of needless regulations, unnecessary, burdensome, cumbersome, costly regulations on what they call ergonomics.

We can come up with better policy, but it's the system of accomplishment. Things are beginning to happen. It requires a President who can set an agenda, work with members of both parties, and share credit when positive things happen. And that's so important. I want people to look at Washington and not see finger pointing and name calling and bickering but accomplishment.

And finally, I believe we have an opportunity in America to usher in a culture of responsibility, a signal that says loud and clear to our country that each of us are responsible for the decisions we make in life, that if we've got an issue in Billings, Montana, don't hope that the Federal Government will wave some magic wand and solve—[*applause*].

All of us in positions of authority must uphold the offices that we occupy. All of us with responsibility must understand that

it all starts with those of us who are fortunate enough to be able to say we're a mom or dad. It all starts with loving our children with all our heart and all our soul and all our mind. No, the greatness of the country lays ahead of us when we usher in a period of personal responsibility, when we understand loving a neighbor like we like to be loved ourselves is an important part of the American experience, where we have a hopeful nation, a nation that holds up hope for everybody who is fortunate enough to be called an American.

I see a great day ahead for this country. But it all counts on the people. I'm here to ask for your help. You're only an e-mail away from influencing public policy, only a phone call.

It is such an honor to be here. Marc was right; I was incredibly inspired not only when I saw the beautiful countryside but when I saw the hundreds of citizens who took time out of their day to come by and wave. And I'm honored that so many folks came here today. It makes me feel great. I'm honored to be your President. It's a huge, huge honor. I won't let you down.

God bless. God bless America. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:10 p.m. at the MetraPark Expo and Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to former Gov. Marc Racicot, Gov. Judy Martz, and Lt. Gov. Karl Ohs of Montana; Harry Martz, husband of Governor Martz; Senator Max Baucus; and Representative Dennis R. Rehberg.

Memorandum on Delegation of Responsibilities Related to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
March 22, 2001

Memorandum for the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Defense, the United States Trade Representative

Subject: Delegation of Responsibilities Related to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

By the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States of America, including section 301, of title 3 of the United States Code, I hereby delegate to the Secretary of State the following functions vested in the President:

(1) the functions of the President contained in section 594 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2001 (Public Law 106–429);

(2) the functions of the President contained in section 1511 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1994, to exempt Serbia and Montenegro from the sanctions specified in that section, and to waive or modify the application of those sanctions;

(3) the functions of the President contained in section 1(c) of Public Law 102–420, to restore normal trade relations status for goods produced in Serbia or Montenegro by certifying that Serbia or Montenegro, as the case may be, has ceased armed conflict with other ethnic groups in the former Yugoslavia, has agreed to respect the borders of the republics that comprised the former Yugoslavia, and has ceased all support for Serbian forces inside Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Any reference in this memorandum to provisions of any act related to the subject of this memorandum shall be deemed to

include reference to any hereafter-enacted provision of law that is the same or substantially the same as such provision.

The functions delegated by this memorandum shall be exercised in consultation with the National Security Council, Department of the Treasury and other agencies as appropriate, and may be redelegated as appropriate.

The Secretary of State is authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register.*

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 27. It was not received for publication in the *Federal Register.*

Remarks at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Michigan
March 27, 2001

Thank you very much for that warm welcome. I am honored to be back here in Kalamazoo. The last time I came, I think I went to the school right down the street, if I'm not mistaken. And it is a thrill to be back. It's an honor to be with my friend the Governor of the great State of Michigan, a man who I really enjoy being around, a guy who's done a fabulous job as being your Governor, John Engler.

It's good to be with the Lieutenant Governor, Dick Posthumus—good to see you, Dick; Candice Miller. It's great to be here with Dr. Floyd. I got to know Dr. Floyd last summer. I was impressed by him then; I'm doubly impressed by him now. He does a fabulous job for this important institution. Thanks for having us, Dr. Floyd. I'm honored to be in your presence again.

I want to thank the leaders of the Kalamazoo Chamber of Commerce, Kevin McCarthy. I'm honored that you would have me here. I'm here to talk about a subject that's dear to our collective hearts, our Nation and its economy.

Before I do so, though, I want to thank all of the Members of the United States Congress who are here. I see Upton, Fred Upton, is here, and Peter Hoekstra, Vern Ehlers, Nick Smith, Joe Knollenberg, and Mike Rogers. I'm honored to be in your presence. I would spend more time talking about you, except we're flying back to Washington on Air Force One. It will give me ample time to visit with you about where I think we need to be heading. [*Laughter*]

But the good news is, with those that are here, I have no doubt that they're going to do the right thing. We've had a chance to see them in action before. I submitted my bill a month ago to Congress to reenergize our economy. And this Michigan delegation, at least these folks here, stood strong for the working people of Michigan and voted for real, meaningful tax relief for the people of this important State. And I want to thank you all.

Important elements have passed the House and are now before the Senate. We have made progress. But there's a lot of work to be done, and I'm here to ask for your help. If you like what you hear, you're only an e-mail away from letting two Senators know what you think.

I find it's important to get out of town—at least out of the Nation's Capital—to take my message directly to the people who matter. You see, oftentimes, what I try to say in Washington gets filtered. Sometimes, my words in Washington don't exactly translate directly to the people, so I've found it's best to travel the country. I'm coming in from Billings, Montana. We had about 12,000 people show up last night to hear my—gave me a chance to talk about

what tax relief means and what commonsense budgeting will do for our Nation.

You see, it's the President's job to look for warnings of economic trouble ahead and to heed them and to act. I got elected because the people want the President to act, and that's exactly what I'm going to do. My approach is based upon common sense, and here it is: We must put more money in the hands of consumers in the short term and restore confidence and optimism for the long term; we need an immediate stimulus for our economy and a pro-growth environment for years to come.

Some in Congress want America to choose between these goals, to think of the moment and not the future. But lasting prosperity requires long-term thinking. And if we face facts and act boldly, I'm confident we can build the long-term prosperity we seek.

The American economy is like a great athlete at the end of the first leg of a long, long race, somewhat winded but fundamentally strong. We pioneer new technologies in new industries. The dollar is as respected in Kiev as it is in Kalamazoo. The world's shrewdest investors put their money in America. The world's best students come to study in America. And the world's most ambitious people come to work in America. This is an economy that has done amazing things, and it's on the verge of even greater accomplishments and achievements.

Individuals make it happen. That's what we've got to understand. The future just doesn't happen; individuals make it happen. And the right public policy empowers individuals in America. My policies face reality as we found it and lay the foundation for future growth.

As many Americans know firsthand, U.S. stock markets have been declining steadily for more than a year. The NASDAQ peaked a year ago last March. The Standard & Poor's 500 did the same. The Dow Jones Industrial Average peaked 15 months ago in January of 2000. Since those peaks, the Dow has lost nearly 20 percent of its value, the S&P more than a quarter of its value, and the NASDAQ more than half of its value. These declines have hurt almost all investors, and they've surprised and worried many new investors.

In the final quarter of 2000, the American economy grew at a sluggish 1.1 percent pace. In that same quarter, there was no growth at all in new business investment. Industrial production began dropping last October, and almost every week brings us reports of layoffs, especially in manufacturing. Michigan has been hit especially hard. According to the latest figures, unemployment has risen more in Michigan over the past year than in any other State of the Union. Some regions of America, and some industries, are doing better, but the trend is clear, and the need for action is urgent.

In the short term, the American consumer needs a hand. About 25 million families are carrying more than $10,000 in credit card debt. Many families have tried to reduce their debt by tapping into their home equity, and partly as a result, the average home owner's equity share in his or her house declined in the 1990s. More than a few consumers counted on their earnings in the stock market to help them carry their obligations. They need tax relief fast. In fact, they need it yesterday. So I strongly support the idea of back-dating tax relief to get cash into the consumer's hands as swiftly as possible. And I applaud the Members of Congress, Republicans and Democrats, who have come forward to endorse quick action on tax relief.

Yet, our economy needs more than a pick-me-up, more than a one-time boost. Our economic health depends on people feeling comfort and confidence about long-term decisions to start a new business, to invest in a new idea, to buy a new home. And the people who make those decisions don't care only about this year's tax rate; they care about next year's rate and the year after that.

Immediate tax relief is good news. But tax relief that gets yanked away next year is not such good news. Lower rates do not stimulate much economic activity unless people can rely on them for years down the road. We must rebuild business confidence and market confidence and consumer confidence through a permanently improved business environment. Lower tax rates mean a new home will be more affordable, not just the first year but every year. Lower rates mean that a new investment will have a better chance of success, not just the first year but every year. Lower rates mean that a startup company will keep more of its earnings in not just the first year but in every year.

The long-term growth of our economy also depends not only on real, meaningful tax reductions but also on increasing productivity. America has prospered more than any other major economies in recent years because our productivity has grown faster than that of other major economies and faster than we, ourselves, once believed possible. Since 1995, in fact, productivity has grown nearly twice as fast as it did between 1975 and 1995.

What makes productivity go up? Well, you know as well as anybody, it's education and investment. If our productivity is to continue to grow, our people must know more tomorrow than they know today. They must read better. They must calculate faster and more accurately. They must understand science more deeply. So our education policies must insist upon results. We must be bold enough to measure our children's progress. We must hold schools accountable. And we must give parents and children better options if our schools fail to teach and will not change.

And if our productivity is to continue to grow, our tools and machinery and equipment must work better and faster. Our present Tax Code discourages investment by small business and entrepreneurs. The vast majority of American businesses—the vast majority of American businesses—pay tax on the personal schedule, not the corporate schedule.

It's important for Congress to hear this. The number of unincorporated businesses and sole proprietors are huge, but they're the backbone of economic vitality in America. Back in 1990 they faced a top rate of 28 percent. Today, the unincorporated business can face a maximum Federal rate of nearly 40 percent. Those taxes come right out of cashflow, making it harder for small-business owners to make investments that raise productivity, boost incomes, provide benefits to their workers.

High taxes discourage potential entrepreneurs from taking the risk of starting a new business in the first place. Small business generates approximately 75 percent of America's net new jobs. High tax rates are weighing those businesses down. And so I've submitted a plan that not only reduces the rate at the bottom end of the economic spectrum but raises the top rate, as well, to give small businesses the lift they need to continue providing the job base that will keep America strong.

Oh, I know you've heard the rhetoric about only certain kinds of people are going to get relief if you reduce all rates. But I want to talk about two things, two principles: One, if we're going to have tax relief, everybody who pays taxes ought to get relief; and secondly, it's important to always remember, the role of the Federal Government—or any government for that matter—is not to try to create wealth; the role is to create an environment in which the entrepreneur can flourish, in which a small-business owner can grow to be big businesses.

So it's important to send a message to the Members of the United States Senate to be fair and principled and always remember the role that the small-business owner provides in America. Dropping that top rate makes good, strong economic sense for the future of this country.

My plan also will encourage the saving that makes investment possible. The marginal tax rate on savings can reach 68 percent when the impact of the death tax is combined with that of personal income tax. The death tax is unfair. It taxes a person's assets twice. It discriminates against savings, against investment, and against growth. And my plan repeals the death tax.

And my plan reforms Social Security so that every worker can be a saver and an owner. There is no human dream stronger than the dream of having something you can call your own. It is the promise of America, the promise of independence and dignity. And we must reform the Social Security system to give workers the option of directing some of their payroll tax contributions into personal retirement accounts, give every—every—working American an opportunity to be an owner, not just a wage earner.

We will protect those who rely on Social Security. We'll also strengthen our Nation's greatest social program by making it a powerful source of saving and investment, more money in people's paychecks in the short-term, greater incentives for work and saving in the long-term.

Tax relief is central to my plan to encourage economic growth, and we can proceed with tax relief without fear of budget deficits, even if the economy softens. Projections for the surplus in my budget are cautious and conservative. They already assume an economic slowdown in the year 2001. Even if the slowdown were to turn into a recession similar to that of 1990 and '91, the Congressional Budget Office projects that the 10-year surplus would shrink by only 2 percent, from a little more than 5.6 trillion to a little less than 5.5 trillion.

Of course, there's more to economic growth than just taxes and budget. An industrial economy runs on energy, and we must have a strategy to keep the wheels turning and the lights burning.

I know you've seen the news. The lights are dimming in California. Consumers and businesses in California, the West, and all over our Nation are paying sharply higher energy bills. And as we compare our future energy needs to the currently projected domestic energy supply, we see an ominous, growing gap. Our people are paying a high price for years of neglect, and the time to act is now.

I directed Vice President Cheney to lead a task force that will produce the comprehensive energy strategy this Nation needs and has lacked for many years. The energy problem wasn't created overnight, and we won't solve the problem overnight. But we will at last start down the right road, so that the shortages we face today will not recur year after year.

We'll not solve the energy problem by running the energy market from out of Washington, DC. We will solve the energy problem by freeing the creativity of the American people to find new sources of energy and to develop the new technologies that use energy better, more efficiently, and more cleanly.

The tests for any energy policy are simple: Does it increase supply, and do its incentives encourage conservation? A policy that fails to meet these tests is bad public policy, and that is why this administration does not and will not support energy price controls. Price controls do not increase supply, and they do not encourage conservation. Price controls contributed to the gas lines of the 1970s, and the United States will not repeat the mistake again.

And there's another mistake we won't repeat, the mistake of putting artificial barriers in the way of world trade. When economy slows down, protectionist pressures tend to develop. We've seen this happen before, and it could happen again. So I want to say this as clearly as I can: Trade spurs innovation; trade creates jobs; trade will bring prosperity. If our trading partners trade unfairly, they'll hear from us. This

administration will always speak for American interests, but free and open trade is in our national interest. The world will know this, that I strongly and my administration strongly supports free trade.

Twenty years ago hundreds of millions of human beings were walled off from the global economy by the policies of their own Government. And those walls are coming down. And people in Mexico and the Americas and Asia and Africa and eastern Central Europe are being set free to join the world, to understand the promise of market-oriented systems. It's a big change, and change isn't always easy. But trade lifts lives, and trade furthers political freedom around the world. And it will build the wealth of our Nation.

I believe this. I believe I must speak straight with the American people. The American economy began slowing last summer, but we know how to emerge from trouble. I like to look at what my predecessors did in the past. John F. Kennedy supported tax cuts to jump-start a sluggish national economy in the early 1960s. Ronald Reagan used tax cuts to break us out of stagflation in the early 1980s. And I strongly believe that meaningful, real tax relief can ignite another generation of growth, a tax plan that doesn't play favorites, a tax plan that cuts taxes permanently, a tax plan that not only gets money in people's hands quickly but a tax plan that stimulates investment and enterprise and entrepreneurial growth. That's the tax plan I submitted.

You know, some in the Congress are saying, "Well, Mr. President, your plan is too little," and some are saying, "It's way too big." But after careful thought, I can look you in the eye and say, "I think it's just right," and I hope you'll join me.

I remember campaigning here in the great State of Michigan—I think John might remember this—and people kept saying, "Well, it just doesn't seem like your tax plan is getting much steam. Nobody seems interested." And I said, "Well, I think you miscalculated our campaign. It's not one that's based upon polls or focus groups. The campaign I wage and the administration I'll run is one based upon doing what I think is right. I'm worried about hard-working people in America. I worry about the man or woman who goes to work every single day and has high energy bills to pay and credit card debt to worry about. I worry."

I also understand this basic premise of America, though, that we've got to trust the people of the country to make decisions, that the whole fundamental concept of America is based upon individual freedom, and our Government must trust people. And it starts with understanding that the surplus—it is not the Government's money; it is the people's money. And we ought to trust them with their own money.

And that's the fundamental debate in Washington, DC. If you listen carefully, the people up there will use every excuse in the book to increase the baselines of Government. At the end of last year, the discretionary spending in Washington, DC, increased by 8 percent. It's vastly larger than the rate of inflation. So the new administration came to town and said, "Why don't we focus and set some priorities and slow the discretionary rate of spending down to 4 percent?" And I must confess, it created some to squawk and holler.

But we submitted a budget that sets priorities. It doubles Medicare. It sets aside all the payroll taxes for Social Security. It focuses in education. It pays the people who wear the uniform of the military more money. But I think it's important—we pay down $2 trillion of debt. There's $1 trillion set aside over the next 10 years for contingencies, and there's still money left over. And I strongly urge the United States Senate to remember where that money came from. It's the people's money, and we need to send it back to the people who pay the bills in this country.

Now, this is an issue about trust, as far as I'm concerned. Who do you trust? And

I want you to know, I trust the people of this country. I not only trust them to spend their own money more wisely than the Federal Government will spend it, but I trust the people to provide a compassionate tomorrow for our fellow citizens.

You see, I understand the great strength of this country is not in the halls of Government, faraway capitals; it's in the neighborhoods of Kalamazoo, Michigan. It's in the churches and synagogues and mosques that dot this landscape.

We'll debate budgets and line items and all that, but one thing that can't be debated is, the true strength of our country lies in the hearts and souls of citizens who hear the universal call to love a neighbor just like they would like to be loved themselves. The true strength of the country takes place in acts of kindness that no Government official probably has ever heard of, where somebody walks across the street and says, "What can I do," to somebody who needs a hand, or that Boy Scout or Girl Scout leader who dedicates time to teach a child values, or the after-school program run by a Girls' Club or Boys' Club, where somebody says, "Gosh, I'd like to help somebody understand somebody loves them." Now, that's what America is all about.

And our Federal Government not only must trust people with their own money; we must empower the great compassion of America by trusting Americans all across the country. It begins by working on changing the culture of the Nation's Capital, and I think we're making good progress. There's a culture of responsibility beginning to become a part of our Nation's Capital that each of us understand if we're given the awesome tasks that we're responsible for upholding the offices we hold. There's a culture of respect beginning to take hold in the Nation's Capital, where good people can disagree but on respectful terms. The American people are sick and tired of finger pointing and name calling to try to tear somebody down to build themselves up. It's time to have good public policy become the focal point of this Nation's Capital.

And I'm convinced that by changing the tone of Washington and by setting lofty goals and remembering where the great strength of this country comes from, that this land of ours can achieve anything we set our mind to; that not only will this economy come roaring out of its doldrums, but we'll be a land where the fabric is made up of groups and loving centers that really say to somebody, "I want you to succeed"; that the American hope belongs to everybody who lives in this great land.

I love being your President. I'm honored you're here. Thank you for giving me a chance to state my case, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:42 p.m. in the Student Recreation Center. In his remarks, he referred to Michigan Secretary of State Candice S. Miller; Elson Floyd, president, Western Michigan University; Kevin McCarthy, first vice chair, Kalamazoo County Chamber of Commerce; and State Senator Mike Ross.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to UNITA

March 27, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-

month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) that was declared in Executive Order 12865 of September 26, 1993.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
March 27, 2001.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting
March 27, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to section 19(3) of the Public Telecommunications Act of 1992 (Public Law 102–356), I transmit herewith the report of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting covering calendar year 2000.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
March 27, 2001.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters
March 28, 2001

Federal Budget

The President. I want to thank the leadership of the House and the Senate for coming up. Today's a big day. The House is going to take up a budget, a budget that is a commonsense budget, one that meets priorities, one that grows discretionary spending by 4 percent, a budget that protects Social Security, a budget that funds Medicare. It's also a budget that recognizes that this Nation needs a tax relief package to stimulate our economy.

I want to thank you for coming, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate you, Chairman Thomas, for working with Members of the House to get the package moving quickly. Later on this week you'll be taking up, as I understand, the child credit and the marriage penalty and, later on, the death tax. And I appreciate your leadership.

I've been very encouraged to see that Members on both sides of the aisle have been talking about the need not only to have immediate stimulus to the economy but certainty in our country, by having rates reduced. But reducing just one rate is not enough. In order to encourage the growth of our small businesses and enhance the entrepreneurial fervor of America, we need to cut all rates, so that there's certainty in our economy when people plan. And I'm confident we can get this done. It's in the best interests of our country that we do so.

I want to thank the Senators who are here. We've got a big vote coming up next week on the budget. The chairman is here of the Budget Committee. He's a man who understands the importance of tax relief to stimulate growth. I appreciate you, Mr.

Chairman, for your hard work. And we look forward to working with you.

Thank you all for coming.

Campaign Finance Reform

Q. Mr. President, on campaign finance reform——

The President. I'm talking about the budget today. There will be ample time to talk about bills in progress. Today I want America to hear, we're going to get a good budget out of the House, and we'll get a good budget out of the Senate. And it's in the best interests of the working people that we do so.

Q. Will you say if there's——

The President. I'm talking about the budget today.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:46 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Representative William M. Thomas, chairman, House Committee on Ways and Means, and Senator Pete V. Domenici, chairman, Senate Budget Committee. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks in a Meeting With Crewmembers of the Space Shuttle *Atlantis*
March 28, 2001

Well, it's my honor to welcome to the Oval Office some of our leading scientists and entrepreneurs, space entrepreneurs. Ken, thank you very much for coming. These five folks represented our Nation well in space. They represent the best of the country—very capable, strong, smart citizens who understand that our Nation must always be exploring space. And I'm glad you all are here. Thanks for coming.

Thank you very much, sir, for being here, as well.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:56 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to *Atlantis* Mission Commander Kenneth D. Cockrell, Pilot Mark L. Polansky, and Specialists Thomas D. Jones, Comdr. Robert L. Curbeam, Jr., USN, and Marsha S. Ivins; and Administrator Daniel S. Goldin, National Aeronautics and Space Administration. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks in a Meeting With Technology Industry Leaders
March 28, 2001

Thanks for coming. I appreciate that warm welcome. And welcome to the people's house. It's a nice place to live. [*Laughter*] And I'm glad I'm living here.

I want to thank Lezlee for all her hard work in putting together this group of leaders from around the country. I want to thank the members of the Cabinet who are here, some of whom you'll hear from in a little bit. Elaine Chao and Spence Abraham and Paul O'Neill and Don Evans really represent the best of the country, and I really appreciate the fact that they've left their—left the private sector to serve the country. We've got a really good Cabinet. One of the lessons I learned in the private sector was, it's important to set an agenda and to delegate to good, honest people. And I have done so.

I was going to say, thanks for all the Members of the Congress who are here, but I see Members of the Senate who are here. Thank you all for coming. Senator Hatch, Burns, and Allen are some of the very best public servants our country has got to offer, and I want to thank you all for coming. I'm looking forward to working with you on the budget. [*Laughter*]

I first want you all to know that this administration has great confidence in the future of our technology industry. We recognize, like you do, that the stock market may be sending a little different message right now, that people have suffered losses and there are some difficult times for some of the companies in the high-tech world. But the accomplishments of the industry are rock-solid. The future is incredibly bright.

You've changed the way we work and communicate, and you've changed the way we learn. You've done for America—economic leadership in the 21st century—what heavy industry did for America in the 20th century. And all the difficulties you face today really don't cloud a future that is so optimistic and bright.

The social benefits from the tech industry are as sweeping as the economic potential—telemedicine for the sick, distance learning and assistive technology for individuals with disabilities, for example. Your companies symbolize the innovation and optimism of this great Nation. Your success fills us all with confidence in the continued growth of our economy. You make us all a little prouder to be Americans.

You've done so much for your country; it's time for your country to do something for you. I oftentimes say that the role of Government is not to create wealth; it's to create an environment in which the entrepreneurial spirit can continue to flourish.

First things first: We've got to restore consumer confidence. We can help in Washington by returning tax money to the people who pay the bills this year.

We can restore investor confidence by building a better business environment for years to come, starting with having a realistic, sound energy policy, a policy that says, of course we can conserve better, but we need new supplies. We need to aggressively seek new supplies. And not only do we need new supplies of natural gas, for example, we need new pipelines to move natural gas. We need new powerplants. We need an aggressive, forward-thinking energy policy that balances the needs of our environment with the needs of the people of the country.

We can also help by having a world of free trade. You know that one of the concerns is if the economy were to slow down like ours, the protectionist sentiments around America might start bubbling to the surface. Ours is an administration dedicated to free trade. I hope the Congress gives me trade promotion authority as soon as possible, so I can negotiate free trade agreements. We should not try to build walls around our Nation and encourage others to do so. We ought to be tearing them down. Free trade is good for America, and it will be good for your industry, as well.

And finally, we need to have lower taxes instead of bigger Government. We're having a big debate here, but one thing you can't debate is, this is an administration that has put together a pro-growth tax relief agenda, the first one in a long period of time. I mean, not only do we need to get money in consumers' hands as quickly as possible, we need to reduce all rates so that entrepreneurs can plan. I can't think of anything worse than to say, "We'll get money into consumers' hands quickly and then kind of change the rate structure."

And so I want to reduce all rates: the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent; the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent. People say, "Why would you want to drop the top rate?" Well, let's start with this simple fact, that thousands of small businesses pay taxes at the highest rate. The businesses

who are unincorporated, the sole proprietorships, the companies that have started in somebody's garage pay at the 39.6 percent tax rate. And by dropping the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent, we will send a clear message that the role of Government is to create an environment in which the entrepreneur can flourish. By cutting the top rate, we'll provide more cashflow for small businesses to provide more employment.

You know, I've heard all the rhetoric, but the truth is, dropping all rates will be good for our economy, good for planners, good for those who want to think long term. And we can afford it. That's the thing that Congress and the people must hear: We can afford it.

There's a lot of issues with the budget, starting with this: that you now have a President who believes in fiscal sanity when it comes to the people's money; that we've increased discretionary spending by 4 percent in our budget. Now, that may sound like a lot to a lot of you all who are now managing your cash accounts and managing your cashflow. After all, a 4 percent increase is greater than the rate of inflation. A 4 percent increase in a budget is greater than most working—the raises working people have gotten this year.

Except the problem is, here in Washington, it's half of—exactly half of what was increased—how the discretionary accounts increased last time. You see, they had a bidding contest, a bidding war last time. It was like, the person who bid the highest got to go home. And therefore, the discretionary accounts increased by 8 percent, and we can't afford that kind of spending in Washington, DC.

So a President and an administration has come along and says, "Let's set priorities, and let's focus, and let's always remember whose money we're spending. It is not the Government's money; it's the people's money." And for those who say we can't afford meaningful, real tax relief that will stimulate the economy, they're the ones who want to increase the size and scope of the Federal Government. They trust the Government to spend people's money. And that's not the philosophy of this administration. Once we've set priorities, we trust the people to spend their money. We trust the entrepreneurs with enhanced cashflow. We trust the working people to manage their own accounts.

And that's the debate here in Washington, and I'm asking for your help. I would like for you to e-mail your Senators. You don't have to worry about the Members of the House. And by the way, you don't have to worry about—don't e-mail these three; they're solid. [*Laughter*]

I'm optimistic. I'm very optimistic. The terms of the debate have somewhat shifted. I can remember campaigning in your neighborhoods, and people would say, "Well, he's just talking about tax relief, and he really might not mean it. People don't want tax relief." The debate is no longer whether or not we're going to have tax relief; the debate is, how quickly and how big? And I'm optimistic we can get a good package.

Today the House is voting on the budget. Next week the Senate will vote on the budget. It's going to be a tough vote, but all of us are working hard on behalf of the working people of the country and the entrepreneurs and small-business people of the country, to get a good budget out of the Senate.

Today, as well, I'd like to announce that—a cochairman of the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology. He is here with us; his name is Floyd Kvamme. And I'm honored, Floyd, that you'd take on the position.

Science and technology have never been more essential to the defense of the Nation and the health of our economy. I will hear the best scientific and technological advice from leaders in your field. And I can think of no better coordinator than Floyd. He is an entrepreneur. He is a risk taker. He

understands risk and reward. But more importantly, he knows the players, the people that can bring good, sound advice to this administration, and I'm honored to have you on board.

As well, I've got some good news, and you may have been watching the Senate Banking Committee. But after a lot of work with industry leaders and the administration and Members of the Senate, the "Export Administration Act," a good bill, passed the Banking Committee, 19–1.

The technology that you all have helped develop, obviously, gives us an incredible military advantage, and that's going to be important. And it's an advantage, by the way, that we tend—want to develop, to make sure we can keep the peace, not just tomorrow but 30 years from now. We've got to safeguard our advantages, but we've got to do so in ways that are relevant to today's technology, not that of 20 years ago. The existing export controls forbid the sales abroad of computers with more than a certain amount of computing power. With computing power doubling every 18 months, these controls had the shelf life of sliced bread. They don't work.

So in working with the Senate, we're working to tighten the control of sensitive technology products with unique military applications and to give our industry an equal chance in world markets. And I believe we've got a good bill. It's a bill that I heard from you all during the course of the campaign. The principles we discussed are now a part of this bill. I want to thank Senator Phil Gramm for his hard work in working with us and industry and some Members of the Senate to make sure the bill that has been crafted is a good bill. And I urge the Senate to pass it quickly.

Likewise, we want the R&D credit to be permanent, and we're working with Members of the Senate to do so. A lot of us in this administration have been in the world of taking risk. We understand that one of the most important parts about Government policy is that there be certainty in the policy. And I think making the R&D credit a permanent part of the Tax Code is part of creating certainty, so people can more wisely make investments with cashflow in their capital accounts.

And finally, we have a word about education. We're making great progress in education. I know it's a subject dear to you all's hearts. It should be. Your industry thrives on not only capital, dollars and cents, but it also thrives on human capital. And our Nation must do a better job of educating all children.

The principles inherent in the reform package that we're moving through the Senate and the House are these: One, we expect there to be high standards in public education. To put it this way, every child can learn, and systems that don't believe so need to be changed.

Secondly, I strongly believe in aligning authority and responsibility at the local level. I know full well when you disassociate the two, it provides convenient excuses for failure. A school district will say, "Oh, gosh, I would have done it differently, but the centralized authority made me do it this way." It's time to get rid of all the excuses for failure inherent in our school systems. And one way to do so is to pass power out of Washington, to trust local folks to set the path for excellence for the children in the districts in which they live, in which the local folks live. What I'm trying to say is, the Government closest to the people is that which works best.

And finally, we need to have a results-oriented system all around the country. Here's the way I'm doing it. I'm saying if you receive Federal money, you've got to measure. If you receive help at the Federal level, you, the local district or the State, must measure third through eighth grade. And Sandy Kress will describe what we're trying to do.

But the point is pretty simple. How do you know if children are learning unless you test? The accountability systems are not designed to punish folks. It's designed to

make sure children just simply are—are not simply shuffled through the system. We've got to end that practice of giving up on children early.

And so we start early; we measure early; we provide money for remedial education. Every child counts, and every child can learn. And the whole crux of reform is accountability. And when we measure and find success, we'll praise it. But by measuring, you also—one can also detect failure, and that becomes the catalyst for reforms at the local level. We're going to make good progress on education.

And finally, I believe we're making progress in Washington about changing the culture up here. There is now a—people are beginning to be able to debate in a respectful tone. The country isn't interested in the old style—at least, the politics of the past, where the person who screamed the loudest or had the cutest sound byte was the one that appeared to be the most effective. The country wants there to be a level of respect in our debate. And this is an administration that is working hard to provide that. We're not always going to agree, but we'll agree to be—we'll disagree in an agreeable way, in a way that brings pride to the system.

There is also becoming a culture of accomplishment in Washington. Things are getting done. I signed some legislation that had been incredibly onerous for small businesses and large business alike, when the Congress moved quickly to get rid of an ergonomics regulation that just—the cost far outweighed the benefits. It would have been harmful to the private sector. It would have been harmful to those who want to employ people. And they got the people's work done quickly and got it through.

Slowly, but surely, we're beginning to get people to focus on results. You see, I know there's a time for politics, and there's a time for policy, and now is the time for good public policy on behalf of the citizenry of the country.

And finally, I hope we'll be able to start a culture of responsibility, that all of us in this country must be responsible for the communities in which we live. I see Barksdale sitting over here. He is a person who sent a clear signal about what it means to be a responsible citizen by supporting public education, and I know many of you all in the audience feel the same way. But responsibility is not only sharing the wealth that has been generated in important programs, but it's also being responsible as a mom or a dad; responsible for activities that say to a child, "Somebody loves you"; responsible for encouraging mentoring programs in your companies or in your neighborhoods or in your churches or synagogues or mosques.

And we're making good progress in the country. And the reason why is, because this is a fabulous country, that's why. This is a country that has got great heart, great spirit, great vision, and great compassion. And I'm proud to be the President.

God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:45 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Lezlee Westine, Deputy Assistant to the President and Director of Public Liaison; Sandy Kress, Senior Education Adviser, Domestic Policy Council; and Jim Barksdale, partner, The Barksdale Group, and former president and chief executive officer, Netscape Communications Corp.

The President's News Conference
March 29, 2001

The President. Good morning. I first want to say how pleased I am that the House yesterday passed on a realistic, commonsense budget to the Senate. I appreciated the vote. They did the right thing. It's a budget that meets our Nation's priorities. It's also a budget that leaves ample room for meaningful, real, long-lasting tax relief. I look forward to working with the Senate to get a budget passed.

I'm also deeply concerned about the escalating violence in the Middle East. It is claiming the lives of innocent civilians on both sides. The tragic cycle of incitement, provocation, and violence has gone on far too long. Both sides must take important steps to calm the situation now.

The Palestinian Authority should speak out publicly and forcibly, in a language that the Palestinian people—to condemn violence and terrorism. It should arrest those who perpetrated the terrorist acts. It should resume security cooperation with Israel.

The Government of Israel, for its part, should exercise restraint in its military response. It should take steps to restore normalcy to the lives of the Palestinian people by easing closures and removing checkpoints. Last week Prime Minister Sharon assured me that his government wants to move in this direction, and I urge Israel to do so.

I'll be meeting with Egypt's President Mubarak next Monday and Jordan's King Abdullah the week after, to seek their help in defusing the tensions. Egypt and Jordan are two of our most important partners in the region, and their role is crucial.

I've asked Secretary Powell to call Chairman Arafat today and contact other leaders to urge them to stand against violence. Our diplomats in the region are fully engaged in this effort.

Our goal is to encourage a series of reciprocal and parallel steps by both sides that will halt the escalation of violence, provide safety and security for civilians on both sides, and restore normalcy to the lives of everyone in the region. A lasting peace in the region will come only when the parties agree directly on its terms.

This week I vetoed an unbalanced U.N. resolution, because it tried to force the adoption of a mechanism on which both parties did not agree. My approach will be to facilitate the parties' work in finding their own solution to peace. We seek to build a stable foundation for restoring confidence, rebuilding security cooperation, and resuming a political dialog between the parties.

I'll be glad to answer some questions. Ron [Ron Fournier, Associated Press].

Campaign Finance Reform Legislation

Q. Mr. President, the Senate, as you know, is finishing up legislation to ban all soft money. What do you think of the bill, particularly the ban on individual contributions that you forcefully opposed in the campaign? And specifically, sir, would you sign it?

The President. This is a bill in progress. It's a bill that continues to change, and I'll take a look at it when it makes my desk. And if it improves the system, I'll sign it. I look forward to signing a good piece of legislation.

Q. Could you sign a bill that bans individual soft money contributions?

The President. I'll look at the whole bill, and I'll make my determination as to whether or not the bill improves the situation. And I appreciate the hard work that's being done on the legislation, and I'm going to wait until I see the final version.

Yes, Helen [Helen Thomas, Hearst Newspapers].

Q. Mr. President——

The President. Sorry.

Russia/Weapons of Mass Destruction

Q. Mr. President, is your administration reviewing U.S. aid to Russia to stop the spread of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons? Are you considering reducing that aid, and if so, why?

The President. Well, we're reviewing all programs, those related to deescalating potential nuclear problems. We want to make sure that any money that is being spent is being spent in an effective way—have the obligation to the taxpayers to make sure that the money, for example, going to the Russian program, part of Nunn-Lugar, for example, is effective. And so we're putting a full review on the programs.

And we fully intend to continue to cooperate with the Russians. It's in our Nation's best interest to dismantle—work with Russia to dismantle its nuclear arsenal. I was pleased to see that Senator Nunn, one of the authors of the Nunn-Lugar bill, agreed with our approach to take a look to make sure the programs are efficient. And we will continue to do so.

Helen.

Environmental Regulations

Q. Mr. President, in the last few weeks you have rolled back health and safety and environmental measures proposed by the last administration and other previous administrations. This has been widely interpreted as a payback time to your corporate donors. Are they more important than the American people's health and safety? And what else do you plan to repeal?

The President. Well, Helen, I told people pretty plainly that I was going to review all the last-minute decisions that my predecessor had made, and that is exactly what we're doing. I presume you're referring to the decision on arsenic in water. First of all, there had been no change in the arsenic—accepted arsenic level in water since the forties. And at the very last minute, my predecessor made a decision, and we pulled back his decision so that we can make a decision based upon sound science and what's realistic. There will be a reduction in the acceptable amount of arsenic per billion after the review in the EPA.

Q. How about stopping the black lung benefits for families? This is sort of—to increase some of the benefits of these miners?

The President. We will work with members of the delegation and make sure people are properly treated. Ours is going to be an administration that makes decisions on science, what's realistic—commonsense decisions.

For example, circumstances have changed since the campaign. We're now in an energy crisis. And that's why I decided to not have mandatory caps on CO_2, because in order to meet those caps, our Nation would have had to have had a lot of natural gas immediately flow into the system, which is impossible. We don't have the infrastructure able to move natural gas.

We need to have an active exploration program. One of the big debates that's taking place in the Congress, or will take place in the Congress, is whether or not we should be exploring for natural gas in Alaska, for example, in ANWR. I strongly think we should in order to make sure that we've got enough gas to be able to help reduce greenhouse emissions in the country. See, gas is clean, and yet there is not enough of it. And we've got pipeline capacity problems in the country. We have an energy shortage.

I look forward to explaining this today to the leader of Germany as to why I made the decision I made. We'll be working with Germany; we'll be working with our allies to reduce greenhouse gases. But I will not accept a plan that will harm our economy and hurt American workers.

John [John Roberts, CBS News].

Stimulus Package/Tax Relief Legislation

Q. Mr. President, new figures out today show that the economy grew at an annual rate of one percent for the last 3 months of the year 2000. My question to you, sir,

is, what are you prepared to do to immediately stimulate the economy? Because it would appear that your long-term tax package does not do it, yet you dismiss out-of-hand attempts from the Hill to give back a rebate of some $60 billion this year unless it's tied to longer term tax relief. Why can you not sign a short-term package and then pursue your long-term package separate to that?

The President. Well, John, first of all, I support the efforts on the Hill to provide immediate tax relief. I've been calling for immediate tax relief. I think it makes sense to do so. But we've got to have long-term relief, as well. Part of building confidence in our economy is not only give the consumers a boost but to have a plan that reduces rates for the long term, so that people who make investments—small-business owners, the entrepreneurs—will have certainty that the cashflows of the future will be enhanced, so they can expand their job base and make new capital purchases.

I appreciate very much what the leadership in the Senate have—Tom Daschle, for example, talked about immediate tax relief or immediate rebates, plus reducing rates permanently. We just need to reduce more rates than the ones he suggested.

There is a debate going on here in Washington, and it's really, do you want to increase the size of the Federal Government, or do you want to give—let people keep their own money? And there's a philosophical divide. And I'm going to continue to stand on the side of the people and make it as clear as I can that we've met our priorities in the budget I submitted, and it's not only good for the economy, though, to give people their money back, it's good for working families, so they can have more money to manage their own accounts.

There's a lot of focus about national debt in Washington. But it's important for Congress not to forget a lot of folks have got consumer debt, as well. And when you couple high energy prices with consumer debt, a lot of folks are in a squeeze. And I look forward to continuing to make the case.

Q. But with respect, sir, as this debate continues, consumers are not seeing any more money back in their pockets.

The President. That's exactly right. And you've got a good point: Consumers haven't seen any money back in their pockets. That's why it's important for the Senate to act quickly on the budget. I hope there's no delay next week when it comes to the budget considerations. I look forward to working with both House Members and Senate Members, once the budgets have been passed, to get tax relief enacted quickly and to get money as quickly as possible into the people's pockets.

Yes, Gregory [David Gregory, NBC News].

Q. Mr. President, you're no longer negotiating with yourself on tax cuts. There are a lot of other approaches that are out there. Why not say today exactly what you're willing to do to appease both moderate Republicans and Democrats who fear that those projected budget surpluses won't materialize, and they want some way to cut off a tax cut, if that's the case, if we can't afford it? What will you do?

The President. Listen, I'm anxious to talk to Members of the Senate about the so-called look-back provisions. But I'm going to remind people that one-way budget surpluses will not materialize is if Congress overspends. And so any look-back procedure has got to make sure that there are restraints to Government spending. The surest way to eat up the surplus is to have the kind of spending that took place during the last fiscal year, when the discretionary spending increased by 8 percent.

And by the way, I'm still negotiating with myself. People keep—I get a suggestion from here and a suggestion from there. So-and-so suggests something. And good Americans, such as yourself, are trying to get me to negotiate with myself.

Q. Can I just——

The President. Yes, you may.

Q. Let me just bring up another suggestion. [*Laughter*]

The President. Another chance to negotiate with myself?

Q. Will you sign or veto tax cuts that exceed $1.6 trillion, even if it would result from—that increase would result from an immediate stimulus to the economy this year?

The President. David, I hope that Congress does not diminish the size of the tax relief package that I've sent up there nor increase the size of the tax relief package I've sent up there. The 1.6 is the size that I think is right. We've had a lot of discussion here in Washington about whether it's too big or too small. Nothing has changed my opinion as to whether or not—about the size of the package I sent. It's the right size.

[*At this point, a beeper went off.*]

The President. Don't worry about the beeper violation. [*Laughter*] It's a new approach. Gordon taught me a lesson.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. On the Middle East, sir. For a couple months, both you and officials in your administration have indicated you wanted to step back from constant involvement of the U.S. and the President in the conflict and in the peace process. Was that a mistake, given the escalation in both violence and the rhetoric over there? And is what you're doing today essentially an admission that the involvement of the United States and the President of the United States, publicly and personally, is necessary for the parties to succeed?

The President. Terry [Terry Moran, ABC News], I have said all along that this Nation will not try to force a peace settlement in the Middle East, that we will facilitate a peace settlement. It requires two willing parties to come to the table to enact a peace treaty that will last. And this administration won't try to force peace on the parties. That's what the U.N. tried to do the other day. They tried to force a situation in the Middle East to which both parties did not agree. That's why I vetoed their suggestion.

We have been fully engaged in the Middle East. We're on the phone all the time to the leaders. I'm welcoming leaders to come. In order for there to be a peace, this country must develop a—what I call a broad foundation for peace. That means we've got to have good, strong relations with the Egyptians and the Jordanians and the Saudis.

As you may remember, the Secretary of State went to Syria to sit down with Bashar. And we've got a lot of work to do in order to build that foundation for peace, but we're going to make a full-time effort to do so.

But our fellow citizens have got to realize that in order for there to be a peace, there has to be two willing parties. And we will continue to try to convince the parties to become willing to sit down and negotiate a lasting peace. But this country cannot impose a timetable nor settlement on the parties if they're unwilling to accept it.

Q. But merely to contain the violence, sir, do you personally need to get more involved? Is that what you're doing today?

The President. I am involved on the telephone. I met with Prime Minister Sharon. I'm talking to our allies and friends in the Middle East. I've instructed the Secretary of State to call Mr. Arafat. And implicit in your question is the first step, and that is, the violence must cease in order for there to be any meaningful dialog in the Middle East. And so we're in the process of trying to bring calm to the region, and it's going to require more than just one voice.

Obviously, our voice is an important voice for bringing calm to the Middle East; so are other nations. And I look forward to visiting with President Mubarak and King Abdullah to lend—to rally them to try to convince, particularly in their case, Mr. Arafat to speak out against violence

in a language that the Palestinians can understand.

Q. Mr. President——

The President. Major [Major Garrett, Cable News Network].

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge/Energy Resources

Q. You have mentioned today that there is an energy crisis——

The President. Yes.

Q. ——and yet the budget resolutions that have passed the House and are due to be considered in the Senate next week do not include any revenue from the drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. I have talked to the people who have made that decision, and they said it is a political fight, they believe unwinnable, that you could not, nor could they, create the majorities in either the House or the Senate to bring about drilling in ANWR—your number one solution—or one of the top solutions to dealing with the energy crisis. Does this not represent a rejection from your own party in dealing with the energy situation?

The President. Well, Major, first of all, there are other areas in the United States on which we can find natural gas. I think it's important for us to open up ANWR. Whether or not the Congress sees it that way is another matter. That's not going to deter me from having, for example, the Interior Secretary look at all lands that are not—not to be fully protected, for exploration. We've got a plan to make sure that gas comes—flows freely out of Canada into the United States. I talked to the Prime Minister about that.

What I find interesting is that I think—we have meaningful discussions about exploration in the Northwest Territories; right across the line, admittedly miles away, is ANWR. But nevertheless, it's a big, vast region of natural gas. And it's important for us to explore, encourage exploration, work with the Canadians to get pipelines coming out of the Northwest Territories to the United States.

I've talked to the President of Mexico about a policy. There's going to be a lot of areas where we can find natural gas in America other than ANWR. It would be helpful if we opened up ANWR. I think it's a mistake not to. And I would urge you all to travel up there and take a look at it, and you can make——

Q. On energy——

The President. Let me finish please—and you can make the determination as to how beautiful that country is.

Q. If I may follow up.

The President. Yes, Major.

Q. If the American people, looking to you to deal with the energy crisis, and you cannot look to your own party to deal with what you and your own advisers have said is a crucial area in which to explore, how can the American public have confidence in your ability to deal with Congress to address the situation you have called today a crisis?

The President. There's a lot of other areas we can explore, Major, and one of them is to work with the Canadians. There's gas in our hemisphere. And the fundamental question is, where's it going to come from? I'd like it to be American gas. But if the Congress decides not to have for exploration in ANWR, we'll work with the Canadians.

I'm interested in getting more energy supply so that businesses can grow and people can heat their homes. We've got a shortage of energy in America. And it doesn't matter to me where the gas comes from in the long run, just so long as we get gas moving into the country, so long as we increase supply of natural gas.

And we also need to have clean coal technologies, as well. And we need a full affront on a energy crisis that is real in California and looms for other parts of our country if we don't move quickly.

Senator John McCain

Q. Mr. President, as I'm sure you've been aware, there are stories consistently about tensions, persistent tensions between you and Senator John McCain, dating back to your rivalry in the primaries. I wonder if you could address that, not just on the campaign finance reform bill but also on the Patients' Bill of Rights, which McCain supporters believe you don't want to sign a Patients' Bill of Rights with McCain's name on it.

The President. Well, look, this is Washington, DC, gossip, is how I view it. I respect John McCain. I like him a lot. That doesn't mean we're going to agree 100 percent of the time. Obviously, we've got some differences; that's what a primary was all about, airing our differences. But I respect John. I realize—it's a game in Washington to try to create tension between John McCain and me, and I'm not going to let it happen.

I can't control the stories that seem to be popping up all the time—faceless aides that are out there trying to stir the pot. I can just give you my perspective. I like him. He's a good man. We have some differences, and I think the idea, for example, of having a $5 million cap on punitive damages is just not the right public policy. But that shouldn't surprise you. After all, I've signed a bill in the State of Texas with a $750,000 cap on punitive damages. That's nothing personal, just a difference of opinion. And the idea of the President laying out a framework for debate and some guidelines is perfectly acceptable practice in Washington, DC.

Campaign Finance Reform Legislation

Q. Just to follow on that. When you sent the signal, and your aides did, to Congress that they could not count on you to veto a campaign finance reform bill, what message were you sending? A lot of people interpreted it that you're saying to Congress, "If you don't like it, kill it, because I won't."

The President. No. As I said, I look forward to signing a bill that makes the process better. Sometimes the legislators will say, "Oh, don't worry, we've got the President." I'm not sure exactly what that means, except if a bill that improves the system makes it to my desk, I'll be inclined to sign it. I, of course, reserve all options to bills that are forever changing, and those who follow the process know, but I'm going to—I will make my decision once the bill makes it to my desk.

Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority

Q. Can I ask about the Palestinians, sir? Why is it that you have not decided to invite Yasser Arafat here? Have you concluded that he's part of the problem, not part of the solution?

The President. Well, we're going to work with all parties. As I mentioned, the Secretary of State is calling Chairman Arafat today to urge him to stop the violence and to call upon those over whom he's got influence to stop the violence. I've got quite a crowded calendar of leaders who are coming to see me, and I'm looking forward to visiting with President Mubarak and King Abdullah.

Mike [Mike Allen, Washington Post].

Q. I'm sorry, can I follow, sir?

The President. No. Just teasing. Go ahead. Just testing. [*Laughter*]

Q. The Palestinians think you're sending them a signal. Are you?

The President. The signal I'm sending to the Palestinians is, stop the violence. And I can't make it any more clear. And I hope that Chairman Arafat hears it loud and clear. He's going to hear it again on the telephone today. This is not the first time the message has been delivered. It's so important, in order for there to be any kind of discussion about peace, that we stop the violence in the Middle East.

Foreign Relations

Q. Mr. President, allies of the United States have complained that you haven't consulted them sufficiently on your stance for negotiations with North Korea, Kyoto treaty. We have deteriorating relations elsewhere. If you read the international press, it looks like everyone is mad at us. Mr. President, how do you think that came to be, and what, if anything, do you plan to do about it?

The President. Well, I get a completely different picture, of course, when I sit down with world leaders. I'm looking forward to sitting down with Mr. Schroeder here in about 30 minutes. I've had very honest and straightforward visits with many of the world's leaders. There's—I'm sure there were some concerns initially, because they didn't know me, and they heard all kinds of rumors about what our administration would be about. And I now have the chance to sit down and talk to them, face to face.

I'm a pretty straightforward fellow, Mike. I don't mind making my case, and it's important. It's important for world leaders to know exactly where the United States is coming from.

On missile defense, for example, I've assured our allies that we will consult with them. But we're moving forward to develop systems that reflect the threats of today. I mean, who knows where the next terrorist attack is going to come from, but we'd better be ready for it. And I believe I've got the opportunity to convince our friends and allies that our vision makes sense. It brings a lot of common sense to an old, stale debate, the old arms control debate.

In terms of the CO_2 issue, I will explain as clearly as I can, today and every other chance I get, that we will not do anything that harms our economy, because first things first are the people who live in America. That's my priority. And I'm worried about the economy. I'm worried about the lack of an energy policy. I'm worried about rolling blackouts in California. It's in our national interest that we develop a strong energy policy, with realistic, commonsense environmental policy. And I'm going to explain that to our friends.

It is in their interest, by the way, that our economy remain strong. After all, we're a free trading administration. We trade with each other. People are beginning to learn what my administration is like. And they're going to find we're steadfast friends. But a friend is somebody who's willing to tell the truth, and if there's a disagreement, to be able to state it clearly, to make it clear where we disagree.

But for those who worry about our willingness to consult, they shouldn't worry. We are. We're going to be openminded, and we'll have open dialog.

Yes, sir.

Q. Mr. President——

Q. Mr. President, you gave me the floor.

The President. You're next. No, next to next. Let me rephrase it: You're last. [*Laughter*]

Q. No problem.

Tax Relief Legislation

Q. Just to clarify on tax cuts, I wanted to clarify the linkage that you feel is necessary. You have said that you want to have a tax cut rate reduction, and you also support the efforts to try to do a quick retroactive tax cut. When you speak of those two things, will you insist upon one package of bills that includes the rate reduction and any kind of quick short-term stimulus, or would you except some kind of verifiable promise that they'll get to your tax cuts later?

The President. That's the old "trust me." [*Laughter*] Look, it is in our Nation's best interest to have long-term tax relief, and that has been my focus all along. I'm confident we can have it—get it done. I believe not only can we get long-term tax relief in place, since there were countries running some surpluses in spite of the dire predictions about cashflow; I believe we

have an opportunity to fashion an immediate stimulus package, as well. The two ought to go hand in hand.

Those who think that they can say we're only going to have a stimulus package, but let's forget tax relief, misunderestimate—excuse me, underestimate—[*laughter*]—just making sure you were paying attention. [*Laughter*] You were—[*laughter*]—underestimate our administration's resolve to get this done.

Q. Can I ask a followup real quick?

The President. No. [*Laughter*] Go ahead.

Q. Just quickly. The Democrats have demonstrated some flexibility on reducing the lower end of the tax rate reductions. How do you feel about the top? There's talk about the top rate not being as big as you proposed——

The President. Of course we ought to talk the top rate. But see, you're trying to do what Gregory tried to get me to do, which is negotiate with myself again.

Q. What's wrong with that?

Q. I negotiate with Gregory over this——

The President. Please do. When you all come up with a solution, let me know. Gregory is in the top one percent. [*Laughter*] If not, you should be, David.

Last question.

Free Trade in the Americas

Q. Thank you, sir. Mr. President, you spoke about free trade at the last press conference. You've mentioned it today. You'll be meeting tomorrow with the President of Brazil, Fernando Henrique Cardoso. He is the one person—at least Brazil is the one person in the continent, or the one country, who is not in a rush to come to a free trade agreement. They prefer Mercosur, the free trade agreement in South America. Is your administration interested in getting the free trade agreement by 2003 year instead of the 2005 year that's been agreed? And how do you expect to convince Mr. Cardoso tomorrow to follow that?

The President. Well, I—the sooner we can get a free trade agreement in the hemisphere, the better. As to whether or not it's 2003 or 2005, that's—we'll just have to see if we can't convince our friends in South America of the wisdom of doing it as soon as possible.

The meeting tomorrow is going to be an important meeting. Brazil is a huge country. It's got a significant role in our hemisphere, and it's got a very bright future. To the extent that the country is skeptical about our intention to have free and fair trade, I have a chance to undermine that skepticism, and I'm going to. I'm going to look the man in the eye and say, "We are free traders." I will work with—and I'll have Bob Zoellick work with his counterpart to assure him that trade with America will be done in a free and fair way. I think we can make some progress, but we'll see after the meeting.

Thank you all. See you tonight, right? Look, I'm just testing a few lines on you, by the way. [*Laughter*]

Q. Let's hear a few.

The President. You just heard one, but you'll see when you hear me. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 10:32 a.m. in the James S. Brady Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel; President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt; King Abdullah II of Jordan; former Senator Sam Nunn; Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany; Assistant Press Secretary Gordon Johndroe; President Bashar al-Asad of Syria; Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada; and President Vicente Fox of Mexico.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany and an Exchange With Reporters
March 29, 2001

President Bush. It's my honor to welcome the German Chancellor here to the Oval Office. We've just had a very constructive lunch. The briefers told me that the Chancellor is a very straightforward person. They were right, and for that I am grateful, because we were able to get to the point.

And the first point we made—and you'll see this in the joint communique we issued—is that our countries are strong friends. I assured the Chancellor that my administration will work to keep our relations strong. We agree on many, many issues; there's a few we didn't agree on. But as good friends, we can disagree and yet still be friends.

I appreciate the leadership of the Chancellor. I appreciate so very much Germany's role, for example, in trying to keep the peace in Macedonia. By working together, we can stabilize that region. The Government of Macedonia is a government made up of different factions. We, of course, are working together to make sure that the legitimate rights of all people in Macedonia are recognized. Germany has done more than just work the diplomatic side; they've also provided troops in the KFOR, along with the United States, to enforce the border. And as a result of our joint efforts, there is good hope that the region will be stable.

And for that, Mr. Chancellor, thank you for your leadership. It's an honor to welcome you here, sir.

Chancellor Schroeder. Thank you very much, Mr. President, for those very kind words. Ladies and gentlemen, now let me share with you how very pleased, indeed, I am that after having two phone calls so far, I now had an opportunity of finally meeting the President in person.

Let me also share with you that it was a very, very pleasant impression I had, indeed. It was wonderful to see the degree of openness that we had, the frankness we had in the meeting, and also the level of agreement that there was between us.

Mr. President is very right, indeed, when he emphasizes the fact that the ties between the United States of America and Germany are very, very firm. They're very friendly ties which are, in fact, based on joint values that we share and that are deeply rooted in each of our Constitutions, too.

Now, we have obviously addressed a wide range of international topics, questions, and international political affairs. There was a lot of agreement. I can agree with Mr. President; we agreed on practically everything, except, obviously, for one thing, and that was no surprise to you, the Kyoto Protocol.

But here, yet as well, we have different opinions, and we are happy to admit to you that we hold different opinions regarding this. We were also happy to admit to one another that we had different positions on this. But here, too, we very much would like to see to it that we, hopefully, jointly act on other fields in and around—on climate policy. We have addressed the subject of solar energy, for example. We have said that there would be ways of energy efficiency, of more efficient use of energy as such. So we will be conjointly looking at some topics that could all contribute to a better climate in the future.

And to all of that, yet again, we have done on the basis of this very, very friendly spirit that reigned between us; a basis is not only one that can take the strain of this, but it will, indeed, and happily so.

In a nutshell, one last thing I would like to say. We are both firmly convinced that

it is a prime aspect of both of our jobs to make sure that the economies in our respective countries are going well and strongly, and we have to keep them robust. And where that is not the case, we have to get them back on track.

President Bush. We'll take two questions from the Americans and two questions from the German press, alternating.

Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change

Q. Mr. President, on the Kyoto Protocol, the friendly atmosphere here is not matched in some statements in the German Government in Berlin and in other capitals. What's your reaction to the criticism that you've abandoned the effort to contain global warming? And what in particular don't you like about the Kyoto Protocols?

And Mr. Chancellor, what practical, pragmatic effect will this difference of opinion have on the effort against global warming?

President Bush. Well, first, I explained this as clearly as I could to the Chancellor, and I'm glad to do it again to you. I did so earlier in a press conference, as you may remember.

Our economy has slowed down in a country—in our country. We also have an energy crisis. And the idea of placing caps on CO_2 does not make economic sense for America. And while I worry about emissions—and we'll work together to achieve efficiencies through new technologies, and I'm confident we can do that—I'm also worried about the fact that people may not be finding jobs in America.

And I will consult with our friends. We will work together. But it's going to be in what's in the interest of our country, first and foremost, Terry [Terry Moran, ABC News]. And the idea that somehow we're supposed to get enormous amounts of natural gas on line immediately, in order to be able to conform to a treaty that our own Senate sent a very overwhelming message against and many other countries haven't signed, makes no economic sense; it makes no common sense.

So I'm worried about our economy. I'm worried about our own domestic energy situation. But I'm confident we can find new ways to think about reducing greenhouse gases. And I look forward to working with a country like Germany. Germany is on the leading edge of technology. They've got some of the greatest engineers in the world. And together we can work together to come up with new efficiencies.

Chancellor Schroeder. Obviously, those are all the fields of cooperation which the President just mentioned and which I obviously very highly welcome.

Regarding the Kyoto Protocol, we have the pleasure of hosting the successor conference to the one in The Hague, in Germany this year. And, well, when it comes to that, His Excellency the President and his government will be called upon to take a decision as to how they, to put it casually, want to play it with protocol and with the ongoing conference in Germany—whether they will, on the one-hand side, which would be a possibility, give an opportunity to others to still continue with what they think is right by not voting against it, or to not do so.

Now, obviously, this is an issue for the President and his country to decide. But we very strongly have agreed that the conference, as I just said, is going to take place, I think, in June or July, in Germany, that our respective staff are going to get together and talk about the issue.

President Bush. Somebody from the German press?

Q. How are the 14 EU heads of state going to feel about the reaction that you just stated to the Kyoto problem and to the President's attitude about it? I would have so clearly expected you to be against it and speak up against it, obviously, so how are they now going to feel?

Chancellor Schroeder. No, I certainly have no headache about that whatsoever. I have heard what the President has said

regarding this matter. Not only I have heard it, people in Europe have heard it, too. And some of the European governments have heard it and have criticized it, obviously. That is a normal process in politics. And we'll take it on from there. Obviously, we'll continue discussing these issues.

National Missile Defense/European Strike Force

Q. Mr. President, did military matters come up today, specifically, missile defense, European strike force?

President Bush. Missile defense came up, you bet. And we'll talk about the European strike force after you clear the room. But I'm looking forward to it. Our joint communique addresses a lot of these issues.

I explained this to the Chancellor, that we want to help folks think differently about the post-cold-war era and we want to develop defenses that are capable defending ourselves, defenses that are capable of defending others who so choose to, against the true threats of the 21st century. Russia is not our enemy. The true threat of the 21st century is the extremists who can't stand what Germany or America believes in. They resent our freedoms. They resent our successes. They resent our prosperity. And I look forward to working with our friend as we move down the road toward assessing and addressing the true threats that face us.

I'll let the Chancellor speak for himself on his view. But I've found there to be somebody who is at least interested in our point of view, and for that, I'm grateful.

Chancellor Schroeder. Here, too, yet again, I can say that I cannot recommend taking a lump-sum view, a generic view at whatever we're talking about. And we shouldn't have a generic view regarding NMD or missile defense, either.

Now, obviously, I think in assessing such a comprehensive topic we also have to look at things like the defensive potential that lies within a potential system. We have to see the potential upside in terms of disarmament opportunities that might be in there.

Obviously, we'll also have to look into lots of technical aspects, such as the threat scenario that is behind the whole system. Is it technologically feasible? Can we truly implement it? Who is going to be covered under the shelter? Who's going to be invited to be included by the shelter that we're going to build? What are going to be repercussions for the global disarmament process? What are going to be the repercussions on Russia and on China, for example?

Those are all things that I think we need to think about and talk about in an ongoing process. And I can only say how very pleased, indeed, I was to see that the President declared himself ready for an open, ongoing discussion about all of these things.

President Bush. Okay, since Terry asked two questions, it's over. [*Laughter*]

Q. Mr. President, were you able—concerning the U.S. defense system, would Europe and Germany, as part of Europe, be able to contribute and to participate in? Was that something you were able to offer and assure the Chancellor of?

And Mr. Chancellor, would you be able to say that you'd be willing to participate when the time comes?

President Bush. Well, first of all, it's my first chance to sit down with the Chancellor and explain our philosophy about how we're trying to shape the thinking in the post-cold-war era.

I did explain to him what I've explained to the American people, that not only do we need to develop defenses, but we're also going to reduce our own offensive capability. And maybe people will follow; maybe they won't. But we're going to move, anyway, once the Defense Department puts a thorough review as to what we need to keep the peace.

In terms of whether or not we develop a technology that will help make Europe more peaceful or America more peaceful

or the Middle East more peaceful, whatever it is, I'd be more than willing to discuss the technologies and share technologies with our friends.

But we haven't gotten—you know, today was the first step toward me making the rationale as to why I took the position I took. And the positive development, I thought, was that the Chancellor was listening and understood—I believe understood the philosophy and the peaceful philosophy inherent in our strategy.

Chancellor Schroeder. I think it would be wrong at this point in time to assume that what we're trying to do here is that we're kick-starting an armament process for the whole of the world. My personal perspective is that I think the contrary will be the case. And I think the debate about involvement and who does what in the process is one that will come subsequent to having discussed the general, basic things. But then, certainly, when it comes to the involvement and also participation in terms of industrial policy, certainly we'll be interested.

President Bush. Nice to see you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:53 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. Chancellor Schroeder spoke in German, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Joint Statement With Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder on a Transatlantic Vision for the 21st Century

March 29, 2001

The United States of America and the Federal Republic of Germany are linked by a deep friendship. Our meeting today opens a new chapter in our close relationship. At the beginning of the 21st century, we reaffirm our common commitment to the lasting principles which are at the basis of the Transatlantic community of values—freedom, democracy and human rights. On this basis, we are resolved to strengthen and further develop the partnership between the United States of America and Europe. In the age of globalization we want to give it a new quality.

We agree that our cooperation within the Atlantic Alliance continues to be of decisive importance for the security and stability of the Euro-Atlantic region and that this includes an adequate military presence of the United States in Europe. The Atlantic Alliance has adapted itself to the historic changes in Europe after the end of the Cold War and today also plays an important role in promoting stability in the states of Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe. The openness of the Alliance for new members and its offer of a comprehensive partnership to the new democracies on the European continent contribute to peace and security in all of Europe. They are directed against no one.

We share the view that Russia can make an important contribution to maintaining peace and stability in Europe and the world. We encourage the Russian government to further pursue a policy of democratic reforms and offer our cooperation to this end.

We will be partners for the states in Southeastern Europe on their way into a peaceful future. War, aggressive nationalism and extremist acts of violence must belong to the past. We will lend our support to the process of stabilization and democratization in the Balkans, continuing to act in close consultation and jointly. In these efforts, the Stability Pact will continue to play a central role.

Both our countries have long-standing commitments to the territorial integrity of Macedonia. We strongly condemn the violence perpetrated by a small group of extremists trying to destabilize that country's democratic, multi-ethnic government. Their violent methods are hurting the long-term interests of ethnic Albanians in Macedonia, Kosovo, and throughout the region. We strongly support President Trajkovski and the Macedonia government in taking proportionate steps to prevent further violence and urge that they work closely with elected representatives of the Macedonian Albanian community to address legitimate minority concerns. We welcome steps being taken by NATO, the European Union, and the OSCE to help Macedonia contain the insurgents as well as to facilitate a political solution.

We are convinced that the uniting Europe will enrich Transatlantic relations. From the beginning, the United States of America has offered its support to European unification, for a Europe that is strong and capable lies in the interest of the United States just as much as Europe needs a strong American partner. Therefore we view the development of a European Security and Defense Policy as an important contribution to sharing the burden of securing peace which will strengthen the Atlantic Alliance.

The United States and Germany welcome the efforts of the European Union to assume greater responsibility for crisis management by strengthening capabilities and developing the ability to take actions where NATO as a whole chooses not to engage. In this regard, the United States welcomes the European Union's European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP), aiming at making Europe a stronger, more capable partner in deterring and managing crises affecting the security of the Transatlantic community. This involves:

- Developing EU capabilities in a manner that is fully coordinated, compatible, and transparent with NATO;
- The fullest possible participation by non-EU European NATO members in the operational planning and execution of EU-led exercises and operations, reflecting their shared interests and security commitments as NATO members;
- Working with other EU members to improve Europe's capabilities and enables the EU to act where NATO as a whole is not engaged.

Together we are resolved to undertake new efforts in countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and increasingly sophisticated missiles for their delivery. We agree on the need for substantive bilateral consultations, as well as close consultations with other allies and interested parties. We will work together toward a post-Cold War strategy that increases our common security and that encompasses the appropriate mix of offensive and defensive systems, and that continues nuclear arms reductions and strengthens WMD and missile proliferation controls as well as counter-proliferation measures.

We are resolved to increase our efforts to abolish barriers impeding trade between the European Union and the United States of America. In areas where we have differences of opinion we will strive to bring our positions closer together.

In the framework of G–7/8 we will contribute to helping the poorest countries in drawing more benefit from technological development, in particular in the field of information technology. Together we will also increase our efforts towards bringing about a stable global finance system. This will also be of help in overcoming hunger, poverty, and disease in large parts of the world that represent a challenge to all of us.

We share a common concern about global climate change. We openly note that we differ on the best way to protect the earth's climate. The Federal Republic of Germany, host of the Climate Change Conference in Bonn in July, emphasizes that the targets

to reduce greenhouse gases agreed in Kyoto are indispensable to combat global climate change effectively. The United States opposes the Kyoto Protocol because it exempts many countries from compliance and would cause serious harm to the American economy. Both sides, however, are prepared to work constructively with friends and allies to solve the problem. In this context they deem it necessary to develop, among other means, technologies, market-based incentives, and other innovative approaches to meeting the challenge of global climate change.

We attach particular importance to the fight against HIV/AIDS. We want the G–7/8 to intensify their efforts to ease the suffering of millions of people who are inflicted by this disease. We consider it to be of particular importance for the pharmaceutical industry to take additional measures so that HIV/AIDS patients in affected developing countries can be supplied with medication at affordable prices.

We welcome the agreements on the establishment of the German Foundation Remembrance, Responsibility, and the Future for compensation payments to former forced laborers. We note with great satisfaction that the German companies now have made available their total share in the Foundation. We call for a swift implementation of the agreements on all-embracing and enduring legal peace so that payments to the aged former forced laborers can begin as soon as possible.

German-American friendship constitutes a pillar of Transatlantic relations. It must continue to be based on broad popular support in the new century. To this end, we will, on both sides of the Atlantic, encourage even more contacts among members of the younger generation.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Remarks to African American Leaders
March 29, 2001

Thank you all. The legislative branch is always trying to take something from the executive branch. [*Laughter*] Thank you, J.C., for helping set up this meeting. And thank you all for coming. It's my honor that you're here, and I want to welcome you to the people's home.

Before I begin, I do want to make mention of the fact—and ask you to join me in a moment of silence—a Member of the United States Congress passed away today, Norm Sisisky from the State of Virginia. I know you'll join me in asking God's blessing on Norm, as well as on Rhoda and his four sons and seven grandchildren.

[*A moment of silence was observed.*]

Amen. Thank you very much.

Secretary Paige, thank you very much for being here. I've known Rod a long time. You may remember, at one time I was the Governor of the great State of Texas. [*Laughter*] And we had a superintendent of schools in our largest school district who insisted that every child could learn, and he caught my attention by saying that. And then not only did he insist that, he worked hard to make sure that that was the case. And it's such an honor to have Rod make the sacrifice of moving from Texas up here and becoming the Secretary of Education. People are going to be proud of the job he does. It doesn't matter what your political party is; you'll be proud of the job this man does. Thank you, sir.

I know the Lieutenant Governor of the great State of Colorado is here, Joe Rogers. And I don't know if Kenny Blackwell is here from Ohio. We've got elected officials, I know, from Oregon and Nevada and all around the country. Thanks for coming.

I love the old words of Jackie Robinson—he one time said, when President Kennedy did something he disagreed with, he said, "The President is a fine man," but he reserved the right to change his opinion. [*Laughter*] Every President, whatever his party, is judged not only by the words he speaks but, more importantly, by the work he leaves behind. And that's what I hope my administration is judged on—by the work we leave behind.

I will constantly speak for the values that unite our country: personal responsibility, equal justice, equal opportunity for everybody. These are important common values. And I've set this administration to the work of putting those values into practice and into law.

The work begins where opportunity usually begins, and that's in the schoolhouses. I have made public education the number one priority of this administration for a reason: Because when we get it right, when every child learns, America will be a much more hopeful place.

Today, all the children—there was a day when all the children couldn't enter schools. Some of you may remember that. I'm not trying to age you. [*Laughter*] As a result of a lot of hard work, that has changed. All children can enter schools, but the fundamental question now is, once in school, will all children learn? And that's the question all of us must ask. And if not, we must insist on change—we must insist on change. I've asked Congress to spend more money on education. But I've also asked that we expect more in return.

A good education system is one that's based on some fundamental principles. One is high expectations for every child. You all know, those of you involved with education know, if you lower the bar, if you have low expectations, you get those kind of results. If you assume certain children can't learn, certain children won't learn. So, inherent in any good reform system is one that sets high standards.

Secondly, it's so important to trust the local folks; it's to set power out of Washington so as not to provide convenient excuses for failure. We must align authority and responsibility at the local level. There's nothing worse than having a school system where centralized authority says, "You must do it this way," and when there's failure, somebody says, "Oh, we would have succeeded except somebody told me to do it the way we didn't want to do it." Authority and responsibility must go hand in hand.

And finally, at the center of reform, something Rod and I worked hard on in Texas, is to measure, is to insist upon accountability. There's a lot of fear about accountability in the education system. People view it as a way to punish. That's not our vision. We view it as a way to correct.

How do you know if a child isn't learning unless you measure? So it's so important that Congress gets the message that in return for Federal help, States and local jurisdictions must develop accountability systems that measure third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade. It's important that we disaggregate those results, so that we treat each child as an individual. It is important that we post the results so people know and, as importantly, when we find success, thank the teachers and principals that are working hard. But when we find failure, instead of accepting the status quo, do something about it. That's why it's important to start measuring early.

I've got a reading initiative in front of the Congress that starts with those in kindergarten. It basically says, in order to access the money, you must develop diagnostic tools so that we can determine early whether a child needs extra help, extra time on task. It says, we'll use curriculum that works, not fancy, feel-good theories, but curriculum that actually can take a child

from illiteracy to literacy. It says, if need be, teach reading all day long until you get it right, because literacy, as our friend Phyllis Hunter said in Houston, Texas, "is the new civil right."

And so this is an education program that's based upon principles. I firmly believe that when implemented, that when it's in place, that we'll begin to achieve the goal and dream that we all want, and that's an educated tomorrow.

I also know that—the importance of our historically Black colleges. I know it well, because in our State of Texas, many of our finest citizens have been educated at those places of higher learning. And therefore, in the budget I've submitted to the Congress, I'm asking for an increase of 1.4 billion over a 5-year period of time. I hope Congress doesn't blink. I hope they join us in this important mission.

And people say, "Well, is there money? Do you have enough money in Washington to be able to make those kinds of commitments?" Let me talk about my budget, because there's a lot of discussion about budgets. And I want to thank the House for passing what I call a commonsense budget. It's a realistic budget.

It's a budget that has set priorities. One of the priorities is education. In the budget is the amount of money I've just spoken to.

It's a budget that sets aside all the payroll taxes for Social Security and only Social Security. That old-style, that old, tired debate hopefully will be put to rest now forever, so they don't try to scare folks away from good public policy.

The budget doubles the Medicare budget. That's over a 10-year period of time we double the Medicare budget.

It's a budget that increases the—doubles the number of folks who will be served in the community health centers over the next 5 years. I don't know if you know what the community health centers are. They're places where folks living on the edge of poverty, maybe the newly arrived, can get good primary care in the health care system.

It's a budget that talks about, how do we enable the working uninsured to purchase health insurance?

It's a budget that grows by 4 percent in the discretionary side of things. Now, 4 percent is greater than the rate of inflation; 4 percent is greater than most people's paychecks have increased. But for some, 4 percent isn't enough. I happen to think it's just right, because by focusing and by having a budget that's realistic, it leaves more money left over. And with this economy beginning to sputter, we need to send some money back to the people who pay the bills. We need to have meaningful, real tax relief.

And we can afford tax relief. We certainly can afford tax relief. And that's the debate: Can you afford tax relief, or do you want bigger Government? And after setting priorities and, by the way, paying down $2 trillion of debt over a 10-year period and setting aside money for contingencies, I firmly stand on the side of letting people keep their own money. It's not only good for the economy; it's good for people, more importantly.

The crux of the issue is, who do you trust with the money? And I trust the people. It's their money to begin with. This surplus is not the Government's money; it is the people's money. And so we've submitted a plan that I think makes the code more fair, eminently more fair.

If you're a single mother in America, let's say, trying to raise two children—if she's at the income level of $22,000 and makes an additional dollar, she will pay a higher marginal rate on that dollar than someone who makes $225,000 a year. The way our Tax Code is structured is that for every additional dollar above the level of 22,000, in this case, for this particular woman, she starts losing her earned-income tax credit, she pays the 15 percent bracket for the first time, and she pays payroll taxes. Our

code is structured so that somebody struggling to get ahead, somebody working the hardest job in America, pays a higher marginal rate than successful folks—Wall Street bankers.

And that's not right, and that's not fair. So one of the things we have done is, we worked with Congress to drop the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent and doubled the child credit from $500 to $1,000, making the middle class easier to access than the current code. The code is more fair.

I also drop the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent. My attitude is that everybody who pays taxes ought to get tax relief. I get nervous when I hear we're going to have targeted tax cuts. I guess that's okay, just so long as you're not targeted out—[*laughter*]—just so long as the target is fixed in the right way. I don't believe in trying to pick or choose winners and losers in good public policy. I think everybody who pays taxes ought to get relief.

But I have been reminding people around here about the benefits of dropping the top rate, and it's important for you all to hear this. By far, the vast majority of small businesses are unincorporated businesses, sole proprietorships, maybe Subchapter S corporations, all of which pay taxes at the highest marginal rate.

There's a lot of discussion, and rightly so, about, how do we encourage ownership in all communities in America? Well, one way to do so is to have an environment for the growth of small businesses in America. It turns out there are many hundreds of African Americans who are starting their own business. And public policy people got to think about how to create an environment so that those businesses can flourish. And one way to do so is to let people keep more of their own cashflow so they can reinvest it.

Seventy-five percent of the new jobs in America are created by small businesses. And 100 percent—100 percent—of the great hope of America comes when somebody owns a company. And that's what it's all about. So I urge Congress not to get trapped in the—the kind of the rhetoric of class warfare, and think about the positive benefits that come by encouraging the growth of the small-business sector of America.

I see many of my friends here who are involved in the faith community, and I want to thank you all for coming. As you know, there's been a lot of discussion about a Faith-Based Initiative. My attitude is that Government can pass laws, and we can work on matters of justice—and by the way, we will. Racial profiling is wrong. I've instructed the Attorney General to come up with a plan to end it, and he's following through.

But what Government cannot do is cause people to love one another. I wish we could. We would sign the bill. J.C. will sponsor it—[*laughter*]—I think. Won't you? And I will sign it. [*Laughter*] But love comes as a result of a higher calling, in many cases. Love comes from hearts. And our job in America is to gather the great compassion of America.

You know, we were talking about, earlier—I remember my friend Tony Evans gave a speech outside of Dallas, in Greenville, Texas. And he talked about the greatest welfare programs are on every street corner in America, because there are houses of worship where people have heard the universal call to love a neighbor like they'd like to be loved, themselves, people who spend their days trying to help a neighbor in need.

Government can't make people do that. We've got to recognize the limitations. But what Government can do is encourage faith-based programs and their mission. What Government can do is fund an individual who we'd like to help and let that individual make a choice as to whether or not they want to find help in a secular program or in a faith-based program. Government can do that.

And we can do that without offending the process-oriented people who worry about church and state. We shouldn't breach the line of church and state, but we should welcome faith-based initiatives and faith-based programs that use a powerful, powerful way of changing people's lives. That's called the power of faith. You change somebody's heart, you change their lives. And Government shouldn't fear faith-based initiatives. As a matter of fact, we ought to welcome them.

And I want to thank those in the room who have been on the forefront of change, of helping us change Government attitude toward a policy that I'm absolutely convinced is going to positively affect the lives of thousands of people. One such initiative that we've asked for Congress to fund is a mentoring program for boys and girls whose mom or dad may be in prison.

And so these are some of the goals that we're working on here in Washington. I cannot do it alone. One, I've assembled a great team of people, of good people, like Rod and others. I was today with the Chancellor of Germany, and I was at the Oval Office, there in the little dining room. And sitting next to me were Colin Powell and Condoleezza Rice, as we were effecting foreign policy that affects the world. And I've got a great team of people around me.

As you can tell, I welcome good, strong folks—I think that's the sign of a chief executive officer who knows what he's doing—and I empower them, and I work with them. But we can also do some other things. We can help work to change the culture of Washington and to kind of tone down, dial down the rhetoric and dial up success. I'm doing my very best to stop the name calling and the finger pointing, to say that good people can disagree in an agreeable way. It's so important that we have mutual respect in the Nation's Capital. The issues that I've talked about, I don't particularly—I don't think are necessarily Republican issues. I think they're good policy issues. I think these are issues that are best for everybody in the country. Otherwise, I wouldn't be promoting them. And I know we can do a better job. And I hope the country's beginning to get a sense that there is now a culture of respect in Washington, DC, and as importantly, a culture of accomplishment, that we're getting some things done.

And not everybody's going to agree with every detail, but we're getting things done. And that's important, because, after all, those of us who have assumed the high offices we hold must understand we have a responsibility to those offices. We have a responsibility to conduct ourselves in ways in which somebody will say, "I'd like to serve." Public service is a noble calling. Public service is important to this Nation.

But you don't have to be a President or a Congressman or a Secretary of a Cabinet to affect people's lives in a positive way. And that's a message I'm also trying to spread, that the true strength of this country really isn't in the halls of Government or in the White House; it's in the hearts and souls of people who live all across America, without Government, without a President saying to go do this—just walk across the street and say to somebody in need, "What can I do to help?"

And that's why I'm so optimistic about America and so optimistic about our future and so thankful that you are here to give me a chance to talk about our vision.

Thanks for coming, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Representative J.C. Watts, Jr.; Representative Norman Sisisky's widow, Rhoda, and sons Mark, Terry, Richard, and Stuart; Ohio Secretary of State J. Kenneth Blackwell; Phyllis Hunter, consultant, Texas Reading Initiative; Anthony T. Evans, senior pastor, Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship, and president, The Urban Alternative; and Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany.

Statement on the Situation in the Middle East
March 29, 2001

I am deeply concerned about the escalating violence in the Middle East. It is claiming the lives of innocent civilians on both sides. The tragic cycle of incitement, provocation, and violence has gone on far too long.

Both sides must take important steps to calm the situation now. The Palestinian Authority should speak out publicly and forcefully in the language of the Palestinian people to condemn violence and terrorism. It should arrest the perpetrators of terrorist acts, and it should resume security cooperation with Israel.

The Government of Israel, for its part, should exercise restraint in its military response. It should take steps to restore normalcy to the lives of the Palestinian people by easing closures and removing checkpoints. Last week Prime Minister Sharon assured me that his government wants to move in this direction, and I urge Israel to do so.

I will be meeting with Egypt's President Mubarak next Monday and Jordan's King Abdullah the week after to seek their help in defusing the tensions. Egypt and Jordan are two of our most important partners in the region, and their role is crucial. I have asked Secretary Powell to call Chairman Arafat and contact other leaders to urge them to stand against violence. Our diplomats in the region are fully engaged in this effort.

Our goal is to encourage a series of reciprocal and parallel steps by both sides that will halt the escalation of violence, provide safety and security for civilians on both sides, and restore normalcy to the lives of everyone in the region. A lasting peace in the region will come only when the parties agree directly on its terms.

This week I vetoed an unbalanced U.N. resolution because it tried to force the adoption of a mechanism on which both parties did not agree. My approach will be to facilitate the parties' work in finding their own solution for peace. We seek to build a stable foundation for restoring confidence, rebuilding security cooperation, and resuming a political dialog between the parties.

Remarks at the Radio and Television Correspondents Association Dinner
March 29, 2001

Thank you all very much. Well, Lew, thank you very much. Laura and I are thrilled to be here.

I appreciate the members of the press. I think you serve a very useful purpose, especially tonight. As you know, we're studying safe levels for arsenic in drinking water. [*Laughter*] To base our decision on sound science, the scientists told us we needed to test the water glasses of about 3,000 people. [*Laughter*] Thank you for participating. [*Laughter*]

It's good to see so many Members of the Congress here, my fellow Texan Tom DeLay here at the head table. Lew asked me a little earlier if Tom ever smiled. I said, "I don't know. I've only known him 9 years." [*Laughter*]

Senator Lieberman is here. We all know Joe is an Orthodox Jew, so he does no work from sundown Friday until sundown Saturday. This has so impressed me, I myself am thinking of converting—[*laughter*]—so I don't have nothing to do from

sundown Saturday to sundown Friday. [*Laughter*]

Most of you probably didn't know that I have a new book out. Some guy put together a collection of my wit and wisdom or, as he calls it, my accidental wit and wisdom. [*Laughter*] But I'm kind of proud that my words are already in book form. So like other authors, I thought I'd read from it tonight. [*Laughter*] It's like the thoughts of Chairman Mao, only with laughs and not in Chinese. [*Laughter*]

Here's one from the book—and I actually said this. [*Laughter*] "I know the human being and fish can coexist peacefully." [*Laughter*] Now, that makes you stop and think. [*Laughter*] Anyone can give you a coherent sentence, but something like this takes you into an entirely new dimension. [*Laughter*]

Here's another: "I understand small-business growth; I was one." [*Laughter*] You know, I love great literature. [*Laughter*]

I actually said this in New Hampshire: "I appreciate preservation. It's what you do when you run for President. You've got to preserve." [*Laughter*] I don't have the slightest idea what I was saying there. [*Laughter*]

Or how about this one: "More and more of our imports come from overseas." [*Laughter*]

Now, most people would say, in speaking of the economy, we ought to make the pie bigger. I, however, am on record saying, "We ought to make the pie higher." [*Laughter*] It is a very complicated economic point I was making there. [*Laughter*] But believe me, what this country needs is taller pie. [*Laughter*]

And how about this for foreign policy vision: "When I was coming up, it was a dangerous world, and we knew exactly who the 'they' were. It was 'us' versus 'them,' and it was clear who the 'them' was." [*Laughter*] "Today, we're not so sure who the 'they' are, but we know they're there." [*Laughter*]

John Ashcroft, by the way, attributes the way I talk to my religious fervor. In fact, the first time we met, he thought I was talking in tongues. [*Laughter*]

Then there is my most famous statement: "Rarely is the question asked, is our children learning?" [*Laughter*] Let us analyze that sentence for a moment. [*Laughter*] If you're a stickler, you probably think the singular verb "is" should have been the plural "are." But if you read it closely, you'll see I'm using the intransitive plural subjunctive tense. [*Laughter*] So the word "is" are correct. [*Laughter*]

Finally, let's see you wordsmiths out there diagram this sentence: I said—this may sound a little west Texan to you—"but when I'm talking about myself and when he's talking about myself, all of us are talking about me." [*Laughter*]

Now, ladies and gentlemen, you have to admit, in my sentences, I go where no man has gone before. [*Laughter*]

But in closing, the way I see it is, I am a boon to the English language. I've coined new words, like "misunderstanding" and "Hispanically." [*Laughter*] I've expanded the definition of words themselves, using "vulcanized" when I meant "polarized," "Grecians" when I meant "Greeks," "inebriating" when I meant "exhilarating"—[*laughter*]—and instead of "barriers and tariffs," I said "terriers and bariffs." [*Laughter*]

And you know what? Life goes on. [*Laughter*] My wife and my daughters still love me. [*Laughter*] Our military still protects our shores. [*Laughter*] Americans still get up and go to work. [*Laughter*] People still go out and have fun, as we're doing tonight.

I don't think it's healthy to take yourself too seriously. But what I do take seriously is my responsibility as President to all the American people and to the office I hold. And that is what I came tonight to tell you.

Thank you for inviting me, and thank you for your "horspitality." [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:40 p.m. in the National Ballroom at the Hilton Washington and Towers. In his remarks, he referred to Lew Ketcham, chairman, Radio and Television Correspondents Association.

Remarks Honoring Members of the Baseball Hall of Fame
March 30, 2001

The President. Well, thank you very much. Laura and I are delighted to welcome you all to the people's house. The Vice President is delighted to welcome you to the people's house, too. [*Laughter*] This is an exciting day for my administration and all the baseball fans that live here in Washington.

I first want to thank the commissioner for coming. Mr. Commissioner, it's good to see you again, sir. You're doing a great job in shepherding our national pastime through some pretty tough times. And I appreciate your leadership, and I appreciate your friendship.

Speaking about Wisconsin, I'm glad to see my Cabinet Secretary is here. [*Laughter*] Thank you for coming, Tommy; and Mel Martinez, as well. I appreciate you all being here.

We've got some huge fans, baseball fans here. Billy Crystal, I'm honored you're here. I appreciate the movie you're making. I'm looking forward to maybe getting to see it here in the White House. If you would let us do that, it would be such an honor.

I don't know if Costas is here yet.

Bob Costas. Here, Mr. President. [*Laughter*]

The President. Where is he? [*Laughter*]

Mr. Costas. Sometimes it's hard to see me, Mr. President. [*Laughter*]

The President. Representing all the traditionalists in America. [*Laughter*]

Secretary Abraham, I'm sorry—a fine Detroit Tiger fan. Congressman Boehlert, whose district is the Hall of Fame.

I also want to thank Jane. It's good to see you again. I remember coming up to the induction ceremony when my friend Nolan Ryan got inducted. So your hospitality is great. And Dale, thank you for thinking of this.

One of the great things about living here is, you don't have to sign up for a baseball fantasy camp—[*laughter*]—to meet your heroes. It turns out, they come here. [*Laughter*] I want to thank the players, the former players, the managers, and the wives who are here. I think we're going to have a great day.

There are some familiar faces here, but none more beloved than Yogi Berra. Yogi's been an inspiration to me—[*laughter*]—not only because of his baseball skills but, of course, for the enduring mark he left on the English language. [*Laughter*] Some in the press corps here even think he might be my speechwriter. [*Laughter*] I don't know if you know, Yogi, but I quoted you when I went to the Congress the other day to deliver my budget address: "Relieved you made it. We were afraid you might have taken the wrong fork."

And of course, Big Texas here, and Ruth, thank you all for coming—friends of ours who remind us of glorious days we had in baseball. The reason I like to keep Nolan around is, he is a reminder that when we got done with the Sammy Sosa trade, there was still some talent left on the Rangers. [*Laughter*]

But along with Nolan, we've got people like Sandy Koufax and Bunning and Ford and Gibson and Marichal, some of the greatest arms in the history of the game.

Seeing all the pitchers here brings to mind Lefty Gomez's definition of a complete pitcher. They asked Lefty once to share his secret. He said, "It's easy: clean living and a fast outfield." [*Laughter*] And we had some pretty fast outfielders behind us, too.

I'm sorry that Ted Williams couldn't be here today. One time I had the opportunity to watch a batting practice at an All-Star game, sitting right behind Joe DiMaggio and Ted Williams. For a baseball fanatic, it was an unbelievable moment. It might sound funny to you, but at that moment, I said, "Well gosh, all three of us have something in common. We wanted to be big league stars. One of us peaked a little early." [*Laughter*]

I know that we all join together in wishing Ted the very best as he struggles to overcome his illness.

Five decades of baseball are represented here in the White House, from Bob Feller to Duke Snider to Dave Winfield to Robin Yount. I'm just a little biased toward those of you who played back in the fifties. It was my prime as a baseball card collector in the fifties.

Monte Irvin is here. And I remember very clearly seeing him at the first baseball game I ever went to. He was standing in the Polo Grounds, I might add, on grass. Monte, you probably didn't see me because I was up in the stands with my Uncle Buck. But I'll never forget it. And as I recall, Red Schoendienst was there, as well. And gentlemen, if you're half as excited to be at the White House as I was that afternoon, I'm really glad to repay the favor.

Everyone who loves baseball can remember the first time he saw the inside of a real Major League park, with real big league players. It stays with you forever, the greenness of the grass, the sight of Major Leaguers in uniform, the sound of big league swing meeting a big league pitch. And when you're a kid and you actually meet one of your baseball heroes or get an autograph on a ball, that's a big deal, too. It means a lot. Each one of the stars who are here has been a part of that. Each one has given that gift to millions of children for generations. And speaking for all of the millions of boys and girls, I say, thank you.

When I was growing up, there were the Mantle kids—like Crystal and Costas—and there were the Mays kids. You'd think that with Mickey Mantle coming from Oklahoma, which is next door to where I was raised, that I would have been a Mantle kid. But no, for some reason I was a Mays kid, and I was really proud of it, by the way.

Years later when I went to work with the Rangers, I got to meet both of those players and got to meet a lot of other good folks, like Nolan Ryan. And I began to appreciate what the life of a famous ballplayer is like, what a responsibility it is when so many youngsters look up to you. So much is expected of you, whether you're in uniform or not in uniform.

It isn't always easy to be worthy of a kid's devotion or a teammate's trust. But the folks behind us tried. They were successful, and that's what made them great. Baseball isn't just in the stats, though of course, that's part of it. It isn't just the money. It really isn't who makes the Hall of Fame. As much as anything else, baseball is the style of a Willie Mays, or the determination of a Hank Aaron, or the endurance of a Mickey Mantle, the discipline of Carl Yastrzemski, the drive of Eddie Mathews, the reliability of a Kaline or a Morgan, the grace of a DiMaggio, the kindness of a Harmon Killebrew, and the class of Stan Musial, the courage of a Jackie Robinson, or the heroism of Lou Gehrig.

My hope for the game is that these qualities will never be lost. Whatever else changes, even if the same nine innings run longer and the flyballs farther and the grass isn't always grass like it should be, those values are still what makes the boys and girls and the fans and players into legends.

In a small way, maybe we can help to preserve the best of baseball right here in the house that Washington built. After we moved in, I pointed out to a great baseball fan, the First Lady, that we've got a pretty good-sized backyard here. [*Laughter*] And maybe with the help of some groundskeepers, we can play ball on the South Lawn. She agreed, just so long as I wasn't one of the players. [*Laughter*] So, for the next four seasons, we're going to invite kids here from the area to play tee-ball on the South Lawn of the White House.

And so, my congratulations are to not only the new crop of inductees of the Hall of Fame—Winfield, Puckett, to the family of Hilton Smith, and Bill Mazeroski—but congratulations to the Hall of Famers who have made the game what it is. It is such an honor for us to welcome you here. Thank you for coming, and I hope you enjoy the lunch as much as I know I'm going to.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:46 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Major League Baseball Commissioner Allan H. "Bud" Selig; entertainer Billy Crystal; sportscaster Bob Costas; Jane Forbes Clark, chairman, and Dale Petroskey, president, National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum; and Ruth Ryan, Nolan Ryan's wife.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Fernando Henrique Cardoso of Brazil and an Exchange With Reporters
March 30, 2001

President Bush. Thank you all for coming. It's my honor to welcome our friend from Brazil. Mr. President, we are honored—we're honored to have you here. We've got a lot in common. Brazil is a vast nation. It's a democracy. It's a country with a huge economic potential. It's a Government run by a good man.

We've had a good, frank discussion about a lot of subjects. There's no question in my mind that we'll have good relations over the next years. And there's no question in my mind that as we cooperate together, the people of both our countries will benefit.

We've discussed a lot of topics, including trade. We've agreed to work closely together to see if we can't come up with a way for our nations to continue to interface with each other. This country invests a lot of money in Brazil, because Brazil's a safe place to invest money. And we're going to keep it that way, keep our relationship strong.

So Mr. President, welcome, glad to have you here.

President Cardoso. Thank you very much, sir. Let me say that I am very glad to be here, be with you. I knew your father. Now I'm very glad to see the way you are. As I said yesterday, I will put—take out my glasses to see your eyes, because you said that you would like to see my eyes directly.

President Bush. That's right. [*Laughter*]

President Cardoso. I must say that it was a very pleasant conversation about several issues. And I do agree with you, sir, on the sense that Brazil and the United States have to be close and close not just in terms of trade but in terms of the hemisphere in general, in terms of security, in terms of democracy. We have shared values; so why not work together?

And also because we know our responsibilities across the world. We know that the world is uneven, and it's necessary to work—to do a lot of things to offer more perspective to the world, to the hemisphere, to Africa and other parts. And the United States and Brazil can work together. We will work together.

I also see that you are a very informal kind of people, as I am, so I am very glad.

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

President Cardoso. If you allow me now, I speak a little bit in Portuguese because there are lots of Brazilians over there.

[*At this point, President Cardoso spoke in Portuguese, and a translation was not provided.*]

President Bush. We'll have one question from the American press, one question from the Brazilian press, and then everybody can go home for the weekend.

Slobodan Milosevic

Q. Mr. President, there seems to be an effort underway in Belgrade to arrest Mr. Milosevic. Does the United States support this? Will the United States contribute in any way to getting it done? What do you think should happen to him?

President Bush. Well, we've always said that Mr. Milosevic ought to be brought to justice. I had a visit with the Secretary of State about this very matter. We're watching it very carefully. We will cooperate in any way that we're asked to do so.

Brazil-U.S. Trade

Q. Mr. President, in terms of trade, have you, Mr. President, President Cardoso and President Bush, have you been able—do you think that you are going to be able to bridge the differences between the two countries? Are you ready as free traders to fight the protectionists in each of your respective countries?

President Bush. Absolutely, we can work together. We had a very good discussion about trade. The President and I have made a decision that we'll work closely to iron out any differences that may exist. Obviously, each of us have got different issues that we have to deal with within our own borders. I'm mindful of that; so is the President. But the thing that's important is the spirit of cooperation. There are no differences when it comes to the desire to cooperate. I'm confident we'll have a very fruitful relationship. It's in our Nation's best interests that we have close relations with Brazil.

For those of you who have never heard me say this, good relations in our neighborhood is not going to be an afterthought for our foreign policy in America. The best foreign policy starts with making sure that relations in our own hemisphere are very positive. And the fact that the President would come here to Washington and have a fruitful dialog with me is an indication that not only are we interested but so is the President. For that, I'm very grateful.

President Cardoso. That's true. I do agree with the President. I believe that—we have, of course, from time to time, some difference. That's normal between nations. Yesterday the President said, American—to be American first. Well, I would say the same, to be Brazil first. That's normal. But then let's see how to cooperate.

And the point is that regarding trade—you asked what about trade—our problems are going—are being discussed in several meetings. We have been making progress toward a more free trade. Of course we're going to have to take into account the situation in Brazil, Brazilians' interests, and we'll have to see how to solve, eventually, what can be a conflict of interest, but very localized interest, very specific interest. We cannot generalize as if American and Brazil will clash.

No, by being one point to have the difference. So let's try to work together to solve the difference. That's the way.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:15 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his

remarks, he referred to former President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

The President's Radio Address
March 31, 2001

Good morning. This week the House of Representatives approved my budget plan, and next week the Senate will vote on it, as well. My budget is shaped by a simple commitment: We can address our country's needs and still be responsible with taxpayers' money, and we can fund our priorities without expanding Government beyond the bounds of responsibility.

Today I want to give you a little more detail about some of my top priorities, the education and health and character of American children. My budget spends additional money on these goals and spends it in effective, creative ways.

We place a new national emphasis on teaching reading with a Reading First program to help all children learn to read by the third grade. Reading First will more than triple the existing funding for Federal reading programs, funding for early intervention and teacher training.

Another program called Early Reading First will put the best reading methods to use in preschool and Head Start Programs. Again, Early Reading First will triple the existing funding for Federal early reading programs.

My budget increases the funding for Head Start, while giving it a clear mission: to prepare our Nation's most disadvantaged children to learn as soon as they enter school.

My budget cares for children's health, as well as for their minds. In 2002, we'll spend well over $25 billion on health coverage for children under Medicaid and related programs. We invest more than a billion dollars, up 12 percent from 2001, in research into childhood diseases at the National Institutes for Health. We fund 1,200 new community health centers over the next 5 years to bring better care to poor children. Thirty percent of the health care center patients are under 12 years old. We add 94 million to the Women, Infants, and Children nutrition program. In 2002, that program will aid more than 7 million people. The Centers for Disease Control will get a $22 million increase for their childhood immunization program.

My budget plan increases Federal spending on childcare by 350 million, to reach a half million additional children. We provide 200 million extra to provide services for children, services that prevent child abuse and keep families together. And we offer 60 million to help children raised in the foster care system with the cost of college or vocational training.

The values of our children must be a priority of our Nation. So my budget invests in abstinence education and drug treatment. We create a new $67 million program that will make grants to faith-based and community organizations who mentor the children of parents in prison.

This is a long list, but I wanted to make a point: My budget is active and compassionate. Discretionary spending grows by a healthy, responsible 4 percent, enough to meet our needs. We fund goals like education, health, and defense. We reduce debt at a record rate. We set aside a fund for future emergencies. We then have enough money to provide broad tax relief, including relief from the marriage penalty and a doubling of the child tax credit.

Those of us in Washington must always understand the surplus is not the Government's money; the surplus is the people's money.

My budget has the right balance, and I hope you'll encourage your Representatives in Congress to support my budget. And I thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 1:13 p.m. on March 30 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on March 31. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 30 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Statement on the Arrest of Former President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)
April 1, 2001

I welcome today's arrest of Slobodan Milosevic, the former President of Yugoslavia. His arrest represents an important step in bringing to a close the tragic era of his brutal dictatorship.

Milosevic was responsible for great suffering throughout the Balkan region. He deserves to be tried for his crimes against the Serbian people. He also deserves to be tried for violations of international law. We cannot and must not forget the chilling images of terrified women and children herded onto trains, emaciated prisoners interned behind barbed wire, and mass graves unearthed by U.N. investigators.

Milosevic's arrest should be a first step toward trying him for the crimes against humanity with which he is charged. I am confident that Yugoslavia will continue down the path of cooperation with the U.N. War Crimes Tribunal. I am encouraged by the actions that Belgrade has already taken to work with the Tribunal, including its assistance over the last several weeks in transferring two indictees to The Hague. I call on President Kostunica to continue this cooperation and to see that Milosevic is likewise brought to justice.

The United States appreciates the hard job that Yugoslavia faces in building its new democracy. I assure the Yugoslav Government and people that they can count on the friendship of the United States as they continue down the path of democratic and economic reform. We look forward to the day that Yugoslavia is fully part of a Europe that is whole and free and at peace.

NOTE: The statement referred to President Vojislav Kostunica of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Remarks on the United States Navy Surveillance Aircraft Incident in the South China Sea
April 2, 2001

Late Saturday night in Washington, Sunday morning in China, a United States naval maritime patrol aircraft on a routine surveillance mission in international airspace over the South China Sea collided with one of two Chinese fighters that were shadowing our plane. Both our aircraft and a Chinese aircraft were damaged in the

collision. Our aircraft made an emergency landing at an airfield on China's Hainan Island.

We have been in contact with the Chinese Government about this incident since Saturday night. From our own information, we know that the United States naval plane landed safely. Our Embassy in Beijing has been told by the Chinese Government that all 24 crewmembers are safe.

Our priorities are the prompt and safe return of the crew and the return of the aircraft without further damaging or tampering. The first step should be immediate access by our Embassy personnel to our crewmembers. I am troubled by the lack of a timely Chinese response to our request for this access. Our Embassy officials are on the ground and prepared to visit the crew and aircraft as soon as the Chinese Government allows them to do so, and I call on the Chinese Government to grant this access promptly.

Failure of the Chinese Government to react promptly to our request is inconsistent with standard diplomatic practice and with the expressed desire of both our countries for better relations.

Finally, we have offered to provide search and rescue assistance to help the Chinese Government locate its missing aircraft and pilot. Our military stands ready to help.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:38 a.m. on the South Grounds at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Chinese pilot Wang Wei.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt and an Exchange With Reporters

April 2, 2001

President Bush. I'm going to start off with a statement; the President will make a statement. We'll have two questions from the American press, two questions from the Egyptian press, and then you'll be asked to leave in a prompt fashion. [*Laughter*]

Of course, it is my honor to welcome the President of Egypt here to the Oval Office. I had the honor of meeting the President a couple of years ago. I found him to be an engaging, charming, strong leader then; my opinion hasn't changed after our good, frank discussion today.

We're friends. We will remain friends. And we will work together to bring peace to the Middle East, and we'll work together to try to convince all parties involved to lay down their arms, so there would be less violence. I'm also committed to working with the President on relations—economic relations that will be to the advantage of both our countries.

And so it is my high honor to welcome President Mubarak here to the Oval Office and to the United States.

Mr. President.

President Mubarak. Thank you. I'm so pleased to come here for the first time to meet with my friend President Bush in the Oval Office. He's a friend. I know him some time ago. And I'm very keen to work with him on all issues concerning the Middle East, especially the Middle East problem.

We are working very hard, and we are going to cooperate very hard in the direction of peace because our main concern is peace and stability in the area of the Middle East, which is in the interest of the United States, of Egypt, Jordan, and all countries in the area. We are going to

do our best; we are going to cooperate with the main players, with the United States. And I have great hopes that President Bush will do the maximum effort of that so as to reach—lessening the tension and resume negotiations, which is vitally important.

U.S. Navy Aircraft Incident

Q. Mr. President, on China, do you consider the American service personnel hostages? And secondly, is it true that the Chinese have already boarded our Navy spy plane, and how do you react to that?

President Bush. My reaction is, is that the Chinese must promptly allow us to have contact with the 24 air men and women that are there and return our plane to us without any further tampering. I sent a very clear message, and I expect them to heed the message.

Q. Have they boarded the plane, sir?

President Bush. My message stands for itself.

Q. Will you be more involved, sir——

Q. The Middle East situation is deteriorating——

President Bush. Yes, ma'am.

Q. Actually, sir, I had another question, altogether, but the point is——

President Bush. Did Gregory [David Gregory, NBC News] steal your question? That's very inhospitable of you. [*Laughter*]

Middle East

Q. The Middle East situation, sir, is deteriorating day by day. The press is speculating the American administration is disengaging itself from the area. Can the Middle East afford this vacuum by the absence of an active American role? And have you formulated a new approach, if any?

And President Mubarak, please comment afterwards.

President Bush. Well, we're very engaged in the Middle East and will remain so. As a matter of fact, the Secretary of State has been involved on the telephone this morning with Prime Minister Sharon. I have had numerous telephone conversations with leaders in the Middle East. I'll continue to be actively engaged at promoting a peaceful resolution of the issue. After all, most of our conversation today was talking about how to bring peace in the Middle East.

I understand that we can facilitate peace. We can't force a peace. And we will use our prestige and influence as best we can to facilitate a peace. Part of it is to build a strong foundation for peace in the Middle East. It's important for us to build strong relationships with countries such as Egypt and Jordan and other countries in the Middle East who have got a stake in peace. But we will remain very actively engaged, and hopefully, there will be positive results.

It is very important for people to realize that the United States will not set a timetable that meets our specific needs. The only lasting peace is one in which the parties involved come to the table. And the role for strong countries like ourselves and Egypt is to encourage, first, the violence to end and, secondly, for discussions to begin again. And I'm very optimistic and hopeful that we'll be able to achieve that.

Q. Mr. President——

Q. Mr. President, your comments——

Q. A comment from President Mubarak——

President Bush. Hold on. AP man. AP man. Excuse me. Oh, sorry.

President Mubarak. I think the President told you everything about that. He is committed to work for peace. We are not going to impose any solution on the parties. We are going to facilitate the situation so that they can sit together, negotiate, and we will help them to reach a final conclusion for peace, because all of us need stability in the area.

Q. The U.S.-Egypt relation is bigger than just the peace——

President Bush. Of course.

Q. Is that true?

President Bush. Oh, absolutely. The U.S.-Egyptian relation is about economic commerce; it's about cultural exchanges. Absolutely. But one of the key things is that we can use our historic relationship to work together to bring peace in the Middle East. It's an important part of our relationship, but not the only important part.

U.S. Navy Aircraft Incident

Q. Mr. President, do you see this accident as a provocation on the part of China or a true accident? And what will it do to U.S.-Chinese relationships, especially your decision on selling arms to Taiwan?

President Bush. Well, I made a very clear statement about how I viewed the incident. It is clear that we had a plane flying in international—over international waters that was damaged. It landed, and we expect there to be contact, as soon as possible, with our crewmembers. And we expect that plane to be returned to us.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:14 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to the National Restaurant Association
April 2, 2001

Well, Denise, thank you very much for your kind introduction and your leadership. I'm honored to be here, and I'm glad you all are here, as well. I'm so pleased with the strong support that my budget and tax relief plan has received from the restaurant folks all across America. It means a lot. A lot of Members of Congress and Members of the United States Senate eat in your establishments, so it's a pretty good place to start the lobbying process. [*Laughter*]

First, I want to describe a little bit about the budget I submitted. It's created some heartburn in Washington because the increase in discretionary spending wasn't as large as some would like to see it.

In the past, during the last fiscal year, the last year that affected this fiscal year, the discretionary spending in our budget went up by 8 percent. Now, that's a lot. It's a lot when you're talking in terms of billions of dollars. It's a lot when you're trying to preserve money for Social Security. It's a lot when you're worried about the state of our economy. It's too much—the increase was way too much. It's almost as if there was a bidding contest to determine who got out of town first.

And so, we came to town with a new attitude that said, we can meet priorities if we control discretionary spending. We can meet priorities; we can pay down debt if we control discretionary spending. We can meet priorities, pay down debt, set aside money for contingency, and send back money to the people who pay the bills if we control discretionary spending.

And so, I submitted a budget to the United States Congress, which passed the House—it's going to be voted on in the Senate—that limits discretionary spending to 4 percent. Now, for some who don't pay attention to all this process, 4 percent sounds like a little bit. But it is—and it is, compared to what happened during the last budget negotiations. But I want to remind you, it's greater than the rate of inflation. It's greater than maybe some of the pay raises that you're giving the folks that work for you. It's a pretty healthy chunk of money. It's a big increase.

Yet, for some, it's not enough in Washington. And what we're trying to do is fashion the debate to say that 4 percent is plenty, particularly since we strongly believe, and I strongly believe, that we need real tax relief. We not only need to have tax relief that gets money into people's pockets quickly; we need long-term tax relief that will send a signal to the entrepreneurial class of America that tax relief is real, it's permanent, you can make your plans based upon a new tax system.

There are some in Washington who would like to see the issue go away by saying, "Here's some immediate money for everybody, and let's hope they forget about long-term relief." My position is clear: For those who want to accelerate tax relief, we're joining right with you. We think it's important to have quick injection of cash into our economy. But in order to make sure the environment for entrepreneurial growth is consistent and strong, we have an opportunity to have long-term tax relief.

And that's what I'd like for you to help me convince Members of Congress to listen to. Because you see, the great American experience is to own your own business, is to own your own home, is to own something. It's that no matter where you're from or who you are or what you're—how you're raised, if you have an idea, you can go out and start a restaurant. And it's your own.

And the role of Government has got to try to create an environment so that people can—that people feel comfortable about investing. There needs to be certainty when it comes to investment. There also needs to be recognition of the role small businesses play in our society.

The tax relief plan I submitted cuts taxes on everybody who pays taxes. It affects those at the bottom end of the economic ladder by dropping the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent, increasing the child credit from $500 to $1,000 per child. But it also drops the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent.

See, I recognize that most small businesses—and there are many small mom-and-pop restaurant owners all across America who are not incorporated. They're sole proprietorships. They have Subchapter S corporations, where they pay—where the tax rate they pay is not the corporate tax rate, not the C-rate, but the high individual rates. And so by dropping the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent, we're saying to people who started their own business, "Well, the environment is going to be better. You'll have more cashflow so you can reinvest in your company. You'll have more cashflow, so you can employ more people."

This Congress must hear, loud and clear, the role of small businesses in our society when it comes to new job creation: 75 percent of the new jobs created in America are created by small-business people. And so tax relief is aimed not only at helping people at the bottom end of the economic ladder, but the tax relief package also is aimed at encouraging and stimulating entrepreneurial growth in America. And that's what Congress must hear.

Now, they'll try to debate the issue all kinds of ways and throw all kinds of smokescreens up. But reality is that a real, meaningful tax relief plan is good for investment in the private sector and job creation.

One of the most interesting moments of the budget debate came when I was in Council Bluffs, Iowa, and a lady stood up and said, now, she was a proud mom and proud grandmother, and that she had baked cookies for a long time in her family. And every time she left a plate of cookies on the table, her children, her grandchildren ate them. She's really talking about the budget when she talked about that story. [*Laughter*]

And so the fundamental question is not only how do we stimulate economic growth but what happens to the cashflow if it's not returned back to the people or not taken in the first place—let's put it that way. And I can tell you what's going to

happen to it. It's going to be used to increase the size of the Federal Government; that's what's going to happen. And so this is not only a debate about how to stimulate economic growth; it's a debate about, who do you trust with the people's money? And it's a fundamental debate, and it's a good debate, and I'm glad it's taking place here in Washington.

See, I would rather trust you with your own money to make the proper investment. Once we meet priorities—and, remember, we pay down $2 trillion of debt in the budget I've submitted; we increase discretionary spending by 4 percent; we've set aside money for contingencies. Once we meet those obligations and priorities, I would rather you have your own money so you can make the investments you think are necessary.

I'd rather working people have their own money so they can decide what to do with their hard-earned dollars, as opposed to the Federal Government making those decisions. And that's the debate, and there's a big philosophical divide.

Oh, some folks up here may not want to see it that way, but it's clear to me that it's a matter of trust. And I'm here in Washington; I readily concede I'm a part of the Federal Government—proudly so. But I trust people with their own money. I would rather have people have—once priorities are met—I'd rather have people have their own cashflow, so they can decide how to save and invest.

I don't think 535 people ought to be making the decisions for people with money that I don't think is necessary to remain here in Washington, DC. And I hope you help me spread that message, because it's an important message for this country. It's a fundamental debate about how wealth is created. It's a fundamental debate about who does our Government trust.

I like our position, because when the people begin to hear outside the filter of Washington, DC, you know, when we get beyond those who decide how words sometimes are translated out there in the hinterlands, once people realize Social Security obligations will be met and the Medicare obligations will be met, once they understand, for example, in the first 4 months of this year, there's $40 billion more coming into our Treasury than anticipated, that even though the economy ground down to growth of one percent in the last quarter, $40 billion more will come into our Treasury than we thought—once people hear the facts, they will realize that tax relief doesn't mean somebody is going to suffer; tax relief is a positive.

For too long in Washington, people had to put tax relief in zero-sum politics. We've got one winner and one loser. If you keep more of your tax money, somebody's going to lose. But that's not reality—that's not reality.

Let me reiterate what I just said: $40 billion more in the first quarter of this year, in spite of the fact—anticipated—in spite of the fact that our economy grew at only one percent. The way I like to put it is, it sounds like somebody is overcharged. [*Laughter*]

And there is another issue that's going to be debated here pretty soon, and that's the death tax. I firmly believe that our Nation must get rid of the death tax. You know, I think of all the folks that I met who are struggling with their own small business, not only trying to fight the battles of cashflow and employment and workers' comp and all the issues that small-business owners deal with—liability—but I'm also thinking about all those who dream about leaving their assets to a child. And what a wonderful thought that is, that somebody's worked all their life to start their own business, so that a son or daughter can run it as part of a family legacy. And yet our Tax Code makes it really hard for that to happen.

There's a lot of small-business owners, a lot of restaurant owners who inherent a restaurant and are unable to pay the cash

necessary to accommodate the evaluation and, therefore, are out of business. There's a lot of farmers and ranchers who have to do the same thing, and that's not fair. It's not fair to tax a person's assets twice.

I urge the Congress to listen to the voices of the people who are working all day long to build up their asset base and their business. It doesn't matter who you are or where you're from, this affects all Americans in a negative way. And I think we're going to get a positive response out of Congress.

And you can help. You can help by talking to the Congresspeople from your district and the Senators from your States. I truly believe—I believe you can have a great presence here in Washington. I know there's a lot of frustrated folks outside in the country that say, "Well, I can't influence Washington." I disagree. I think you can. I truly think you can.

I think one of the reasons why we've gone as far as we have in the tax relief plan is because a lot of people in America are beginning to hear reality and hear the truth that we've got enough money to meet needs and let people keep their own money. A lot of people are beginning to realize that this is a plan that is fair, an eminently fair plan. If you pay taxes, you ought to get relief.

The idea of Washington, DC—of people in Washington saying, "We're going to have targeted tax cuts"—you know what that says to me? It says, people can decide you win, and you don't win, and that's not good public policy. It seems like, to me, if you pay taxes, you ought to get relief, and I think that's the American way.

I think most Americans understand the role of our Government is not to create wealth but an environment in which small businesses can flourish, in which people can work hard to realize their dream. So we're making great progress.

I remember campaigning during last summer, and people would say, "Well, are you ready to abandon your tax relief plan? It doesn't seem like anybody wants it in America." And I said, "No, I'm not abandoning it. It's the right thing to do. It's the absolute right thing to do." And so now, the debate no longer is, are we going to have tax relief? The debate is, how large will the tax relief package be? And I appreciate your helping getting us to this point.

But we need to work more, because until I sign that bill, I'm going to be relentless on the subject. It is the absolute right thing to do for America. It is the right thing to trust people with their own money. It is the right thing for our economy to accelerate tax relief. It is the right thing to create an environment that is optimistic about the future by having real, meaningful tax reform. It's the right thing to get rid of the death tax. And the American people are hearing it, and they're coming our way.

And a lot of it has to do with leadership such as yourself, who go back to your States and your communities, and says, "Let's pay attention to what's going on in the Nation's Capital. It will affect us—have a direct effect on our livelihoods."

And so, I want to thank you for giving me a chance to come and make my point and make my case, and more importantly, Denise, I want to thank you and your organization for joining us as we get something positive done on behalf of the people.

I am so optimistic about the tone in Washington; it's beginning to change. The habitual name-calling seems to be subsiding somewhat. Even the President, me, when somebody says some things I don't like, I'm willing to smile. [*Laughter*] And there is a spirit of accomplishment; we're beginning to get something done. And that's so important. It's so important, so that when people look at Washington, they're not disgusted at what they see—what they see, as opposed to this needless partisanship that sends a signal that, all of a sudden, the people don't matter. We need to replace that with a spirit of, at least, respectful disagreement, and I think we're making pretty good progress.

So I'm pleased with the progress we're making. I'm mindful that we've got a lot more work to do, and I want to thank you all for giving me the chance to come and make my case.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:11 p.m. in Presidential Hall at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Denise Marie Fugo, chairman, National Restaurant Association.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters
April 2, 2001

Trade Promotion Authority

The President. It's my honor to host a discussion on trade and its advantages to our country. I want to thank the leaders of the House and the Senate in both parties for being here. We've got a lot of work to do in order to get trade promotion authority, but I'm confident that we can work together to do so. It's in our Nation's best interest that we trade. It's in the interest of those who provide jobs. It's in the interest of our farmers and ranchers. It's in the interest of small-business owners. And as I was reminded, it's in the interest of those of us who care about our values as to how to spread our values around the world.

This is an issue that is going to require close cooperation between members of the Republican Party and the Democrat Party. But that's achievable because trade is an American issue, and it's an important American issue.

So I look forward to working with the Members. I'm honored you all are here. Thank you for coming. And Ambassador Zoellick, who is the Trade Representative, is working hard on the Hill. And when you all get back from recess, we'll be working with you to see if we can advance the cause.

Thanks for coming.

U.S. Navy Aircraft Incident

Q. Any progress on the Chinese, Mr. President?

The President. Nothing more to report.

Q. Is it safe to assume they boarded the plane?

The President. Nothing more to report. Gregory [David Gregory, NBC News], give it a rest, will you? [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:19 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With the Congressional Hispanic Caucus
April 2, 2001

I thank you all for coming. It's my honor to welcome Chairman Reyes and members of the Hispanic Caucus here. I thank them for coming. It's going to give us a very good chance to get to know each other on a personal basis, as well as to talk about some issues that are of deep concern to the Members of the Congress. And Mr. Chairman, I'm honored to have you here.

One of the things that I know the chairman knows is that I respect the Hispanic culture a lot. When I was a Governor for the State of Texas, I used to remind my fellow Texans that our State was richer as a result of the Hispanic culture. And I look forward to working with the members here on a variety of issues, not the least of which is to make sure the world is more peaceful, more educated, and more prosperous.

So, thank you all for coming. Thank you for being here.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:24 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Silvestre Reyes, chairman, Congressional Hispanic Caucus. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Message on the Observance of National Library Week
April 2, 2001

I am pleased to join my fellow Americans in observing National Library Week.

An educated citizenry provides the foundation for a free and democratic society. Libraries promote the sharing of knowledge, connecting people of all ages with valuable information resources. These dynamic and modern institutions, and the librarians who staff them, add immeasurably to our quality of life.

Libraries serve as important centers for collecting, storing, and organizing information. Each year, more than 100,000 books are published in the United States alone, and the U.S. government publishes as many documents. Even beyond these numbers are incredible volumes of newspapers, magazines, and other copyrighted material.

In public, government, professional, or academic facilities, librarians help individuals use numerous resources to complete the simplest or most complex of research-related tasks. This ability to search for information from the oldest manuscripts to the latest references available demonstrates the enduring versatility of libraries.

During this special observance, I commend librarians for their contributions to education and learning throughout our Nation. I also encourage all Americans to visit their neighborhood library. Laura and I send our best wishes to the staff, volunteers, and patrons of libraries across America.

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: April 1–7, 2001, was designated National Library Week.

Remarks at a Leadership Forum in Wilmington, Delaware
April 3, 2001

The President. Thank you, Mr. Jones. I'm honored to be here. Thank you all.

Claven Jones. Before we all get started here, can I ask you a question?

The President. You can do anything you—it's your building, you can do anything you want. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Jones. What did you think about those Power Hour kids upstairs? Weren't they great?

The President. I loved seeing the Power Hour kids. I know societies can change one person at a time. And while those of us in Government are trying to do the best we can with budgets and taxes, what we can't do is make people love one another. But what we can do is encourage loving people to help. And so I saw the Power Hour as an opportunity for children to improve themselves, but I also saw it as an opportunity for people to give something back in our society.

And so I want to thank you for giving me the chance to come. I want to say a couple of things. First, I'm honored to be traveling with the Delaware delegation, the two United States Senators, Senator Biden and Senator Carper. These are smart, capable people. I just hope they do it the way I think they ought to be doing it. [*Laughter*]

We will find—I will assure you this—we'll find areas where we can agree. I noticed Senator Carper dropped a strong charter school bill—and I was at Maurice's school earlier in the year. And Tom and I come from the Governors ranks; we worked a lot together; there's a lot of areas where we know we can work together to improve public education. And there's going to be some times we don't agree, but my pledge to the American people and the people of Delaware is, when we disagree, it will be done in a way that's respectful, where we can treat each other with respect, where we don't have to have this needless name-calling and finger-pointing to get ahead.

And I respect these two Senators. I may not like every vote; of course, they may not like every proposal. But I can assure you that we're working hard to change the attitude of Washington, DC, so there is a more respectful attitude and so there can be a more civil debate about where this country ought to go.

And then, of course, I was pleased to see that I got 100 percent support on one of my proposals from the Delaware delegate, and that is Mike Castle. And one thing I love about Mike is that he is a very thoughtful Member who stays focused. And his focus is education, amongst a lot of other things, but his main drive right now is to make sure we get the education bill right.

And the education bill that we're trying to get out of the House, and eventually the Senate, mirrors much of what you've done here in Delaware under the leadership of then-Governor Carper. And I see members of the legislature here as well. It really says, every child can learn; it's important to trust local people to run the schools; and we must have accountability to determine whether or not every child is learning. And if children are learning, we'll praise the teachers and principals and superintendents. But if not, instead of just moving children through the system as if they don't matter, we address the problems early, before it's too late.

Strong accountability systems lead to reforms. Senator Carper, then-Governor Carper, recognized that. I think I got some credit for recognizing that in the State of Texas. And the whole cornerstone of the reform movement that we're trying to get out of the Senate and the House says that if you receive Federal aid, you, the State, must devise an accountability system to let the folks know whether or not children are learning.

And oh, by the way, let's also have a reading—national reading program that starts teaching children to read early. Let's have after-school programs called 21st Century Programs that not only are run by public school institutions, if that's what the local community wants, but also says programs—community programs or faith-based programs are just as capable about running programs as anybody else is. And so all the Federal money, as far as I'm concerned, for after-school programs ought to

be opened up to every program in the State of Delaware.

And so I'm here to say thanks for what you do. It's good to see—I was going to say old friends, Maurice—friends I've known for a while—not all that old. Maurice runs a great charter school here, as you all know, and he's done a fantastic job.

Mr. Jones—I told him earlier that I wrote a bestseller—actually, I didn't write it; they say—they claimed I wrote it—called "A Charge To Keep," and it's actually about me. So if you're having trouble sleeping at night, you may want to pick it up. [*Laughter*] At any rate—but all the proceeds are going to the Big Brothers and Big Sisters programs and Boys and Girls Clubs of America, because I believe so profoundly—I believe so strongly in mentoring, and I believe so strongly in helping children understand somebody loves them. And Government can't do that, but what Government can do is facilitate programs and allow faith-based programs to access Federal monies so that they can help change hearts.

I don't believe we ought to fund religion, but I do think we ought to fund a person, and that person should be able to choose whether or not to find help at a faith-based program or a secular program.

I view the Boys and Girls Clubs as faith-based programs, by the way, programs based upon the universal concept of loving a neighbor just like you'd like to be loved yourself. And for that, I'm grateful. I want to congratulate the board of directors of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Delaware for having such a profound impact. One in seven children in this State are members of the Boys and Girls Clubs, for which I know you all are most proud.

Rather than falling into the legislative tradition of filibustering, I will now end my remarks by thanking you all for your hospitality, and I look forward to hearing from you.

[*At this point, the discussion proceeded.*]

The President. How old is your charter school?

John Taylor. Our charter school is in its first year.

The President. Great. How's it going?

Mr. Taylor. It is going well. It is going very well.

The President. Did you have many applicants for your charter school?

Mr. Taylor. Yes, we did have quite a few applicants.

The President. And what grades?

Mr. Taylor. We are currently servicing children between kindergarten and fifth grade.

The President. Oh, great. Big jump. Thanks for teaching.

[*The discussion continued.*]

The President. Thank you for encouraging mentoring. You know, the great strength of the country takes place when somebody walks across the street or raises their hand and says, "What can I do to help? What can I do to help somebody in need?" And it's the cumulative kindness of America that really makes our country so different from everyplace else. And it's really important for all of us to understand the power of mentoring and what it means, because really what it means is recognizing that America will be changed one soul at a time.

And I want to thank you for encouraging the Kiwanis to become mentors. And pass the word that the President and the Senators and the Congressmen really do recognize the limitation of Government and recognize the power of love and faith and hope.

[*The discussion continued.*]

The President. One of the things we've all got to do in our society is to encourage and herald the education entrepreneurs all across the country. And the idea of change and recognizing each student—an accountability system recognizing the talents and needs of each student is an incredible part

of reform. And that's what the legislation we're working on in the Senate and the House is going to foster.

And what triggered my thinking is, there's a lot of times where public schools don't change; their systems are inert; they just won't move. And yet, we've got three schools that are new—four—four new ideas, which shows that the State of Delaware has got a system that encourages change when change is needed. And that's the message we're trying to get to Members of the Senate and Congress who don't want change.

One thing—we're going to spend more money, and that's important, but as well there needs to be a systemic change to not only encourage parental involvement but to recognize that the systems have got to be geared on a child-by-child basis. And good accountability measures do that.

We were at a—I saw a computer—I'm sorry to get going here, but we saw a computer upstairs that was able to take a child, figure out its level of learning, and the program adjusts immediately to that child, and then another child gets on, the program adjusts to the learning capacities of that particular child. That's what education systems need to evolve toward, individualized learning, as opposed to lumping kids into groups and just kind of shuffling through the system.

And I appreciate what you're doing.

[*The discussion continued.*]

The President. Thanks. Let me say one thing—Lucretia talked about partnerships. Senator Biden reminded me that some of the money in the program here came from Microsoft and AOL—the point being that corporate Delaware or corporate Texas or corporate America can play a major role in making sure that we match assets with needs, particularly in programs that focus on our youth.

And I want to thank corporate Delaware and your company, as well as others who have heard the call that part of making sure that capitalism runs the full gamut is not only to be able to make a good bottom line, which we all hope for, but also to put something back into the system. So if you're calling for people to put more back in the system, I'm calling right with you.

[*The discussion continued.*]

The President. Yes, I want you all to hear—it's an interesting thing he just said. He said the tutorials take place in the church. That doesn't mean that—let me start over. It means that we need to focus on the child and not on the process.

How sad would it be if our system said, "You can't have tutorials in churches because of the legal process"? And it's important for our society to keep in mind, every child matters. And we ought to be heralding the Reverend Johnsons of the world, as opposed to trying to thwart the Reverend Johnsons of the world. That's what the whole Faith-Based Initiative in Congress is about.

I appreciate what you do. Keep doing it, like I know you will.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:20 a.m. in the Bears Den Gymnasium at the H. Fletcher Brown Boys and Girls Club. In his remarks, he referred to Claven Jones, director, H. Fletcher Brown Boys and Girls Club; Maurice Pritchett, principal, Bancroft Elementary School; John Taylor, principal, and Rev. Clifford I. Johnson, founder, Marion T. Academy Charter School; and Lucretia Young, director, Warner Street YMCA.

Remarks Calling on China To Return the United States Military Crew and Surveillance Aircraft
April 3, 2001

Good afternoon. I want to report to the American people, and especially to the families involved, that I've just talked with Brigadier General Sealock, who earlier today met with our 24 men and women in China.

The general tells me they are in good health; they suffered no injuries; and they have not been mistreated. I know this is a relief to their loved ones and to all Americans.

Our crewmembers expressed their faith in America, and we have faith in them. They send their love to their families. They said they're looking forward to coming home, and we are looking forward to bringing them home.

This is an unusual situation in which an American military aircraft had to make an emergency landing on Chinese soil. Our approach has been to keep this accident from becoming an international incident. We have allowed the Chinese Government time to do the right thing. But now it is time for our service men and women to return home, and it is time for the Chinese Government to return our plane.

This accident has the potential of undermining our hopes for a fruitful and productive relationship between our two countries. To keep that from happening, our service men and women need to come home.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:03 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Brig. Gen. Neal Sealock, USA, U.S. Embassy Defense Attache in Beijing. On Sunday, April 1, a U.S. Navy EP–3E Aries II electronic surveillance aircraft made an emergency landing on China's Hainan Island after a mid-air collision with a Chinese F–8 fighter jet over the South China Sea. The 24-member crew (21 men and 3 women), consisting of one Marine, one Air Force, and 22 Navy personnel, had been held by the Chinese since the incident. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Estate Tax Legislation
April 4, 2001

The House of Representatives action on eliminating the death tax is a victory for fairness and a vote for economic growth. I applaud the spirit of cooperation in both parties that led to today's result.

The death tax lacks common sense and thwarts free enterprise. It is unfair to families who have devoted their lives to building family farms and small businesses. Today's vote is an important step toward restoring fairness in the Tax Code by eliminating the double and triple taxation that results from the death tax.

I look forward to continuing to work with Members of Congress from both parties to enact real and meaningful tax relief for the American people.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on World Intellectual Property Organization Treaties
April 4, 2001

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

As required by the second proviso of the text of the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the World Intellectual Property Organization Copyright Treaty and the World Intellectual Property Organization Performances and Phonograms Treaty, passed by the Senate on October 21, 1998, I transmit herewith the second report on the status of the ratification of those treaties and related matters.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session With the American Society of Newspaper Editors
April 5, 2001

The President. My fellow Texan—[*laughter*]—by way of other States. [*Laughter*] It's good to see you again, Rich; thank you. I've had a great relationship with Rich in Austin, Texas. He occasionally opined in ways I didn't care for, but I always knew he was honest and open. He had his priorities straight: his country and his family. It's good to see members of his family here. I see you lowered your standards by inviting others from the Austin American-Statesman here to Washington today—[*laughter*]—particularly Herman. [*Laughter*]

At any rate, it's my honor to be here. It turns out every President since Warren Harding has spoken to this group. I found that interesting. Harding came here because he was a newspaperman himself. The rest of us just wanted to pander. [*Laughter*]

Of course, with a lot of attention you get as the President, you often occasionally get criticism, and I understand that. You know, I admit, I take it pretty well; after all, I was in baseball. But I wish some of the stories had come out differently.

And so, in the spirit of constructive criticism, I thought I'd make some suggestions to you as to some of the headlines I'd like to see in the future: "Cheney Cloned"—[*laughter*]—"President Has Nothing To Do at All Now." [*Laughter*] "Two Million Overlooked Ballots Suggest Bush Won California." [*Laughter*] "Sri Lanka President Chandrika Kumaratunga Stumped By Name of U.S. President." [*Laughter*] "Gephardt Says Bush Tax Plan 'Just Makes Sense'." [*Laughter*] And finally: "Sammy Sosa Returns to the Rangers"—[*laughter*]—"Says: 'I Want To Go Home'." [*Laughter*]

But I'm really not here to tell you your business. It's your job to tell everyone how to run theirs—[*laughter*]—and you do a pretty good job at it. Few American figures are more legendary than the hard-bitten but idealistic news editor. And I'm aware of that. After all, I've sat through what seems like hundreds of editorial boards.

But I think of people like Benjamin Franklin or Horace Greeley or Meg Greenfield, who we all dearly miss.

As you know, we've had a series of votes recently on a proposed budget. And that's what I'd like to talk about today. Sometimes the Washington filter makes it hard for me to get my message directly to people. And since I view you as people—[*laughter*]—I'd like to go directly to you.

The House passed a budget last week. Tomorrow we'll hear the final say on the Senate budget. The House and I agree: We need commonsense policies to safeguard Social Security and accelerate economic growth. And I hope the Senate joins us.

I've written a budget based upon my vision of an active and responsible Government. Now, I recognize Government has got important work to do; yet, active Government must also be focused and effective. Education is my top priority, and frankly, it ought to be your top priority, as well. After all, an industry which depends on the ability of people to read needs to be involved in education. Children who fail to master reading are going to be left behind in America, and we had better do something about it.

I know Rich Oppel has heard me talk a lot about waging a war on illiteracy. It was a focus of mine when I was the Governor of Texas. It will be a focus of mine as President, and that focus also will be the focus of the First Lady, as well.

My budget reflects the commitment to education. It increases—it has an 11 percent increase in the Department of Education. We triple funding for reading programs. We have got a big focus on early childhood development.

In my budget, we double the Medicare budget by the year 2011. We introduced a new prescription drug program. We finish the job of doubling medical research at the National Institutes of Health by 2003. Basic research gets big increases, as well.

My budget pays for ambitious new programs to mobilize faith-based and community groups, which fight poverty and addiction. We expand the Women's, Infants', and Children's nutrition program by $94 million this year—next year—the Federal contribution to drug treatment by 100 million, Head Start by 125 million, and programs to fight child abuse and neglect by $267 million.

We propose to put 900 million into the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the biggest conservation budget in U.S. history. Over 5 years, we'll devote 4.9 billion to repair and improve our national parks—again, the biggest increase in park upkeep in our Nation's history.

We provide housing vouchers to 34,000 additional low-income families and assist 130,000 others with the downpayment on their first home. We support 1,200 new and expanded community health centers to double the number of patients served in those important institutions.

It's an ambitious agenda, and it doesn't come cheap. The total budget is 1.96 trillion in the year 2002. You know, when you hear all the litany of things we're spending money on, some people are beginning to wonder whatever happened to all the penny-pinching Republicans. But I don't think this budget's too big for the critics, nor do I think it's too small. As I'm sure you can guess, I think it's just about right.

We've prepared a budget with great care. I understand to budget is to choose, so I made choices. We identified priorities: education and health care, research, military pay, conservation, community and faith-based organizations. I gave those priorities the funding they needed, while keeping overall discretionary spending at a responsible rate of 4 percent growth. The result is a budget that keeps our national commitment to Social Security and Medicare, and increases the Federal budget by $100 billion from 2001 to 2002. A $100 billion increase in spending ought to be sufficient.

Let me give you some idea of just how much money 100 billion is. When you adjust for inflation, it is more than all we spent on the Marshall plan—the 5 years' worth of spending on the Marshall plan—100 billion is more than that. It's enough money to run our Government and meet our priorities. The House understood that, and the Senate needs to hear that, as well.

Secondly, the percentage increases in spending of the past few years cannot be sustained. In fiscal 2001, Congress appropriated 8 percent more in discretionary spending than it did in 2000. At 8 percent increase, Federal appropriations will double in 9 years. Eight percent spending increases will burn through the surplus. My budget allows for 4 percent. And that's more than inflation, by the way, and that's more than the average increase in wages in the past few years. And my attitude is, if the taxpayer can get by on a 4 percent increase, so should the Federal Government.

And finally, we need significant tax relief—I mean, significant tax relief—and we need it now. A Democratic Congress passed the Kennedy tax cut, even though there was a deficit, because the country needed it. A Republican Senate and Democrat House passed Ronald Reagan's tax relief, even though there was a deficit, because the country needed it. Our country needs tax relief now, and we have a surplus. I don't think there's any excuse for providing real, meaningful tax relief. We only used about one surplus dollar out of four. My tax relief plan is smaller than President Kennedy's or President Reagan's, but it's just as urgently needed.

I sent Congress a reasonable budget. It gives the Federal Government over 100 billion to spend on important priorities. It pays down debt at a record pace. It leaves room for tax relief. It will help restore economic growth. It's a budget in line with the values of the American people, as you know from trying to cover it.

The budget process is a long and winding one. An observer of Washington legislative processes once said, "It's never over until it's over, and it's never over." It's especially true of how we pass our budgets. No one vote is decisive. There will be a vote today. There will be one tomorrow. I urge the Senators when they cast the vote tomorrow to remember, there's a lot of people in our country who are beginning to hurt, a lot of folks who are paying higher energy bills, a lot of people have got consumer debt. I urge the Senators to prioritize. But always remember that the surplus is not the Federal Government's money. The surplus is the people's money. And once we meet priorities, we ought to share it with the people. It's not only the right thing to do for our economy; it's the right choice to make, to trust people with their own money.

The debate about the economic approach has been a vigorous one, and it should be. I think it's healthy for our country to debate these issues. People of different parties, and as I have discovered, some of my own party, think we ought to spend more than I think we ought to do and have smaller tax relief. But so far, it seems like everybody has shown good will and good intentions, and for that, I'm grateful.

Since I took office a little more than 10 weeks ago, I've personally met with a lot of Members of the United States Congress. I was surprised to realize the other day that I've met with more than 278, and I hope a lot more come down to the White House. You know, I haven't convinced them all, and they haven't convinced me. But we've been able to make our points without making enemies. And it's a good start to changing the tone here in Washington, DC, and that's what's needed, a more civil discourse.

I understand civility doesn't make good copy. I understand it doesn't make good copy to say, so-and-so may not agree, but they respect each other. It's much easier to print the mean word or the pointed attack. And your reporters are just doing their job.

But the truth of the matter is, all of us can work to make America a little more civil, can herald a civil discourse. It's important. Ours is the greatest democracy in the world. Ours is the greatest country in the world. And those of us who are responsible for shaping the dialog must always remember that it's—people are watching. The more civil we can be in Washington, the more civil we can be in our newspapers, the more likely it is democracy will continue to flourish.

Thank you for what you do. I sometimes wish I could shape it a little differently, but I appreciate free press, just like you appreciate free speech. And that's just what I've given you today, a free speech. [*Laughter*]

I'll be glad to answer any questions you have.

[*At this point, the question-and-answer session proceeded.*]

Nominations to the Judiciary

Q. I was wondering if, in the spirit of civility and conciliation you were talking about, whether you think that when it comes to appointing members to the Federal bench, and especially if there are vacancies to the Supreme Court, that you should try, before appointments are made, to engage in a bipartisan conversation with Democrats in the United States Senate who have already indicated that they might be taking a very hard line if they believe you're sending up nominees that are philosophically extreme? Or do you feel that you are like any other President and should operate on the principle of: You propose, and let them dispose?

The President. The latter. We're going to pick the most qualified people we can find, people that share my philosophy about strict constructionism on the Court. I'll be mindful of confirmation. I don't particularly want a big fight in the Senate. And so we'll be putting out—we'll be gathering intelligence as to whether or not a person can be confirmed or not. I may decide to send somebody up that will create a tough fight. I don't know. I haven't gotten there yet.

But of course, I pick somebody, I want them to get confirmed. And so we'll be mindful of that. Obviously, I've made a lot of other—another decision about whether or not we ought to have screening agencies or screening groups, people to screen our people, and I decided not to do that. We'll get a lot of opinions, and not one opinion is more important than another, as far as my administration is concerned. And so we'll pick the people, and the Senate can hopefully confirm them.

China and the U.S. Navy Aircraft Incident

Q. Do you believe it's appropriate for the Chinese to be questioning our airmen that have been downed? And also, what do you believe the Chinese have put at risk with their actions?

The President. I appreciate you bringing up the subject. I want to make this clear. First, I regret that a Chinese pilot is missing, and I regret one of their airplanes is lost. And our prayers go out to the pilot, his family. Our prayers are also with our own service men and women. And they need to come home.

The message to the Chinese is: We should not let this incident destabilize relations. Our relationship with China is very important, but they need to realize that it's time for our people to be home. We're working all diplomatic channels to affect our priority. There's discussions going on. And we'll continue to do so. My mission is to bring the people home.

And as to whether or not we'll have good relations, my intention is to make sure we do have good relations. But the Chinese have got to act, and I hope they do so quickly.

Yes.

Q. Following up on that, are there any circumstances in which you would offer an apology to the Chinese? And secondly, are

you having any second thoughts about your decision to go to China later this year?

The President. I have no further comments on the subject. That won't count as a question. [*Laughter*]

First Amendment Freedoms

Q. Sir, as you know, at the heart of this newspaper organization is its passion for preserving and enhancing the Nation's access to information. Would you take this moment to articulate your own view of first amendment freedoms and give us a sense of the fundamental message that you will send to your administration as it makes decisions on whether to open or close access to Government information?

The President. Yes. [*Laughter*] There needs to be balance when it comes to freedom of information laws. There's some things that when I discuss in the privacy of the Oval Office or national security matters, that just should not be in the national arena. On the other hand, my administration will cooperate fully with freedom of information requests if it doesn't jeopardize national security, for example. The interesting problem I have—or for me, as the President, is what's personal and what's not personal. Frankly, I haven't been on the job long enough to have been—to have had to make those choices.

I'll give you one area, though, where I'm very cautious, and that's about e-mailing. I used to be an avid e-mailer, and I e-mailed to my daughters or e-mailed to my father, for example. And I don't want those e-mails to be in public—in the public domain. So I don't e-mail any more, out of concern for freedom of information laws but also concern for my privacy.

But we'll cooperate with the press, unless we think it's a matter of national security or something that's entirely private.

China-U.S. Relations

Q. I hope you will respond to this question. It's on the Asia subject, but general.

The President. I might. I'm not sure yet. [*Laughter*]

Q. In my region, we have strong economic interests in Asia as an export market. Would you please comment on the balance that you think should be struck between our strategic interests and our economic interests in Asia, including China?

The President. I believe that China ought to be a trading partner of ours. I think it's in our economic interests to open up the Chinese markets to U.S. products—to U.S. agricultural products. I not only believe it's in our economic interest, I believe it's in our interest to promote U.S. values. And I believe the marketplace promotes the values. When people get a taste of freedom in the marketplace, they tend to demand other freedoms in their societies. And so, I'm an advocate of China's entering into the WTO, and I'm hopeful that the current situation ends quickly and our people come home.

China is a strategic partner—I mean, strategic competitor. But that doesn't mean we can't find areas in which we can partner, and the economy's a place where we can partner.

And we've got some differences with China, long-term differences. Spreading of weapons of mass destruction is an issue that we need to work with the Chinese on, as well as other nations in that part of the world. Human rights is an issue. But I believe trade will encourage more freedoms, particularly when it comes to individual liberties. But the marketplace is—the marketplace unleashes the opportunity for people to make choices. And so I will continue to push for trade with China, and——

Q. Still willing to take a few more?

The President. Yes, sir.

Airline Travel

Q. All of us here flew in for this conference. Most of us had delays of one type or another. Earlier this week——

The President. Most of you—sorry?

Q. ——had delays at airports. Earlier this week, there was a report issued which was critical of the airline industries and the mounting problems with service and people getting around the country. I guess my question—coming from northwest Indiana, where the debate is whether to have a third Chicago airport or not—what's your administration going to try and do to solve this ongoing problem?

The President. Well, one thing we need to do is expand the number of runways all around America. And as you know, there's a lot of environmental regulations, some of them meaningful, some of them not, that prohibit the expansion of runways. And step one is to increase accessibility, which will then make it easier to increase competition.

As to your question about whether or not there ought to be a third airport in the Illinois area—I mean Chicago area, I haven't made up my mind yet.

Q. I'm getting the signal from your——

The President. Getting the hook? Thank you for having me.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:17 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the the J.W. Marriott hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Richard A. Oppel, president, American Society of Newspaper Editors, who introduced the President; Ken Herman, reporter, Austin American-Statesman and Cox Newspapers; and Chinese pilot Wang Wei.

Remarks at the United States Conference of Mayors National Summit on Investment in the New American City

April 5, 2001

Brent, thank you very much for those kind words. Mayor Morial, it's good to see you, sir. Mayor Menino of the great city of Boston, I'm sure you're thrilled with the Nomo no-hitter. [*Laughter*] I am pleased to see my friend, the mayor of Knoxville, Tennessee; we went to college together. Mayor Ashe, it's good to see you, sir. Tom, thank you very much—Tom Cochran, who's worked hard for the mayors association. Mayor Archer of the great city of Detroit is here with us. Pat McCrory, it's good to see the mayor of Charlotte.

I can't forget to say hello to my Mayor, the Mayor of Washington, DC, Mayor Williams. I tell you, he is a—one of my first lunches was with the Mayor, and I'm impressed. And I know the mayors who know him are impressed, as well. So Mayor, thank you. There's a couple of potholes out back that I'd like to talk to you about. [*Laughter*] I say that because I've always said the mayors have one of the toughest jobs in America. After all, you are closest to the people. You have to walk your neighborhoods and listen to the people who you know say, "Well, Mr. Mayor, it's good to see you; how about my road?" [*Laughter*] But Mayor, you're doing a great job.

I've got members of my team who are here: Cabinet Secretary Mel Martinez—Mel, thank you, sir. Ruben Barrales, who is running my Intergovernmental Relations Office—thank you, Ruben. If Ruben doesn't return your phone call, we've got an issue. [*Laughter*] He'll return them. And finally, John DiIulio, who is running the Faith-Based Office, and John, I appreciate your being here as well. And Roy Bernardi—where's Roy? Hey, Roy, good to see you. Thanks. Roy is the mayor of Syracuse, and he's coming here to work in the administration.

I respect your work. You all are practical folks who solve problems, and I'm honored

that you're here. And thanks for bringing such good weather, too. I think it's the most beautiful day we've had since I've been the President of the United States, and the Rose Garden is a spectacular place to welcome you. And it's my honor to do so.

Our cities are the testing ground for the American Dream. They're places where young people go to begin their careers. They're places where new immigrants arrive to look for work and a better life. They're places where people of every background seek to fulfill the promise of our country. When we look at our cities, we see our highest aspirations, our incredible diversity, our greatest achievements, and our most pressing challenges. Across America, in cities large and small, a generation of bold and reforming mayors have restored safety to streets and restored prosperity to our Nation's downtowns, and for that, our country is grateful.

The continued renewal of our cities requires five commitments: better education, broader homeownership, faster economic growth, easier environmental cleanup, and stronger communities and charities. All of these goals are reflected in the budget, which the Congress is now debating.

Education gets the biggest percentage increase of any Department in the budget that I submitted. My budget triples spending on school reading programs in year one. We triple spending on preschool reading programs in year one. Education reform costs money, and this administration is willing to spend it. But money alone does not produce reform, and that's why my plan emphasizes results and accountability. Results matter to children; they matter to parents; and they should matter to mayors. And I know they do.

Parents leave cities when they mistrust public schools. Parents stay when they have confidence in the public school system. And a sure way for a school to gain parents' confidence is to show them proven results on a yearly test. We don't test to punish children; we test to help them. In the same way, we don't test to punish urban schools; we test to renew them. Our budget helps to bring high standards to every low-income school in America. It focuses on early childhood programs. It increases spending for Head Start, but it also encourages and invites innovation so that no child is left behind.

Second, my budget promotes homeownership. We want to give as many Americans as possible a stake in their neighborhood and a concern for its future. Yet, the sad fact is 48 percent of Hispanic and African American families—only 48 percent own their own homes. And we must do better in our country. My administration has proposed a Renewing the Dream tax credit to encourage investors to develop housing for low-income families. This tax credit will help build 100,000 new homes in low-income areas.

We also add to a new initiative called the American Dream downpayment fund, to help low-income people with their downpayment on a home of their own. We're putting $1 billion into the American Dream fund over the next 5 years, and our goal is to make owners of 650,000 low-income families. We'll bring the dignity and independence of homeownership to more and more Americans.

Third, my budget is a growth budget for small business. It is the dynamism of the entrepreneurs, many of them immigrants, that have powered the revival of American cities. But entrepreneurs in urban America, like entrepreneurs all over America, are generally unincorporated businesses. They're generally Subchapter S's or sole proprietorships and, therefore, pay taxes at the highest marginal rate.

As you know, I've submitted a plan that reduces all rates on all taxpayers. And it's important for those in the United States Senate to understand that when you drop the top rate, you encourage growth in inner cities by encouraging entrepreneurial spirit to flourish. A drop of the top rate really

says to the urban enterprise, the small-business person in urban America, you'll have more money to reinvest so you can employ more people.

And then there's the issue of burdensome inheritance taxes. As Robert Johnson of Black Entertainment Television argues, the death tax and double taxation weighs heavily on minorities who are only beginning to accumulate wealth. The Senate needs to hear that message. The Senate needs to leave enough money in the proposed budget to not only reduce all marginal rates but to eliminate the death tax, so that people who build up assets are able to transfer them from one generation to the next, regardless of a person's race.

Fourth, we must reform the laws that slow the cleanup of the Nation's brownfields. As many as 450,000 industrial sites have been abandoned. New users have been scared away by the threat of Superfund regulation and litigation. It is time for new thinking. We will set high environmental standards, and we will protect redevelopers who meet those standards from Federal liability. We must cut the redtape that clogs the brownfield cleanup revolving loan fund. And we'll permanently extend the brownfield cleanup tax incentive that is scheduled to expire this year. On the brownfields of yesterday, we will build the green industries of tomorrow.

And finally, my budget aids community and faith-based groups that help our cities take on the worst of our social problems. So I'm so pleased that John DiIulio is here, who's spearheading this effort. We support local efforts to fight illiteracy and teen pregnancy and drug addiction. We promote mentoring programs, especially for the large number of children with a parent in prison.

This summer I look forward to going to Philadelphia to join Mayor John Street as he shows the Nation the compassionate work his city's faith-based and community organizations are doing. These organizations have a message of hope for all American cities, and my budget has a message of hope for them. We will support the caring acts of caring people and not turn them away because they are inspired by the Bible or the Koran.

These are some of my priorities, and we fund them. We repay all the available public debt in my budget. We establish a contingency fund for future needs, and then we reduce taxes to accelerate our economy's slowing growth. We reduce taxes, because we understand many in your cities are struggling to get ahead. We must reduce taxes in order to help pay for the high energy bills that many are now suffering. And we must always remember that the Federal surplus is not the Government's money. The Federal surplus is the people's money.

This is a budget that is reasonable, balanced, and sound. It's a budget that is good for America's cities, which means it's a budget that's good for America.

Thank you all for coming, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:18 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to the following U.S. Conference of Mayors officers: Mayor H. Brent Coles of Boise, ID, president; Mayor Marc H. Morial of New Orleans, LA, vice president; Mayor Thomas M. Menino of Boston, MA, advisory board chair; and J. Thomas Cochran, executive director. He also referred to Boston Red Sox pitcher Hideo Nomo; Mayor Victor H. Ashe of Knoxville, TN; Mayor Dennis W. Archer of Detroit, MI; Mayor Patrick McCrory of Charlotte, NC; Mayor Anthony A. Williams of Washington, DC; and Robert L. Johnson, chairman and chief executive officer, BET Holdings, Inc.

Remarks on Presenting the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Awards in Crystal City, Virginia
April 6, 2001

Thank you, Mr. Secretary. Mr. Secretary, thank you very much for that kind introduction, and thank you for agreeing to serve your country once again. My friend Don Evans couldn't make it, but we have a pretty darn good replacement with Norm Mineta.

Dr. Wood, thank you very much, sir, for your leadership. You may wonder why Dr. Wood has got such white hair. My mother's on his board. [*Laughter*] And if she were here, she would say she has white hair because of me. [*Laughter*]

I'm thrilled to see the Baldrige family. Thank you all for being here, and thank you for staying with this award. They tell me you never miss, Midge, and that's important.

I want to congratulate the winners who are here, the CEO's, the leaders, the employees, the rowdy Texans. [*Laughter*]

[*At this point, the audience whistled and cheered.*]

I rest my case. [*Laughter*] It's an honor to be here.

Before I begin, I would like to update you on the situation in China. Earlier this morning I talked with General Sealock, who once again visited with our crew for about an hour today and reports that they are doing just fine. They are housed in officers' quarters, and they are being treated well. We're proud of these young men and women who are upholding the high standards of our Armed Forces. We know this is a difficult time for their families, and I thank them for their patriotism and their patience. We're working hard to bring them home through intensive discussions with the Chinese Government, and we think we're making progress.

And now to the business at hand: It's an honor to be here, to be a part of an award ceremony that has stood the test of time. And the reason why is that it's based on principles such as high standards, quality, and excellence.

The philosophy of Malcolm Baldrige and the Baldrige Awards make clear that everyone in an organization has a voice, a philosophy which trusts everyone with responsibility. Quality comes from giving people the tools and training their jobs require, the authority they need to do their work the way they think is best, the dignity that comes with knowing that their views matter. To do good work, we need great workers. And great companies, such as those represented here, treat great workers with respect and fairness.

The Baldrige way is good business. The hypothetical Baldrige Index, a stock market index composed of the shares of those Baldrige winners that are publicly traded, has outperformed the S&P 500 for 7 years in a row. As the example of Los Alamos National Bank shows, caring for our communities is a form of quality, as well. And that quality will be rewarded with customer satisfaction and customer loyalty.

The Baldrige quality message is coming to health care and to education. Health care and education were added as categories in 1999. I realize there are no winners yet, but 25 organizations applied in '99 and 19 more in the year 2000. I look forward to presenting the first Baldrige Award in these categories soon.

We thank the Baldrige Foundation, the examiners, the judges, the foundation members, all the volunteers who work so hard. And thank you for your devotion to the highest ideals of American business.

These efforts do justice to the memory of an extraordinary man, Malcolm Baldrige, one of this country's outstanding public servants. He served as Commerce Secretary

at a time when many doubted that American goods could compete in world markets. He dedicated himself to proving the doubters wrong. He succeeded, and America is stronger thanks to him and the award established to honor him.

Thank you for having me.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:52 p.m. at the Crystal Gateway Marriott Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Transportation and former Secretary of Commerce Norman Y. Mineta; Michael Wood, president, Foundation for the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, Inc.; Margaret "Midge" Baldrige, widow of Malcolm Baldrige; and Brig. Gen. Neal Sealock, USA, U.S. Embassy Defense Attache in Beijing.

Remarks on Presenting the Horatio Alger Awards
April 6, 2001

Thank you very much. Welcome to the White House.

Wayne, thank you very much for your kind remarks. It is a real honor for me to be here to congratulate the 105 national scholars, to thank the universities who are going to match the scholarship money that you all have raised, and to thank the award recipients and congratulate you for the example you've set for America.

Before I begin, I want to say I've got a little news I'd like to report. I'm really pleased to report that the United States Senate just moments ago passed a budget that funds our Nation's priorities and allows for over $1.2 trillion of meaningful, real tax relief for the American people.

The House has already passed $1.6 trillion of tax relief. Now the House and Senate will work to find common ground between these two budget plans, and the result will be the largest tax relief in decades. The fact that both Houses of Congress have committed to provide significant relief is good for the American people, and it's good for our economy.

When the House and Senate complete their work, they will have paved the way so the American people can receive an across-the-board income tax reduction, a doubling of the child credit, relief from the marriage penalty, and the elimination of the death tax. This budget also wisely increases spending on education, funds priorities like Medicare and Social Security, and pays down a record amount of debt.

I applaud today's action and congratulate the Republicans and Democrats who helped make it happen.

And I'd like to congratulate this year's recipients. All of you have amazing stories of adversities overcome and great goals attained: The son of a Polish immigrant who started out in his father's burlap bag business and is now the chairman and CEO of two major corporations; a man who in his youth helped support his family, right here in the Washington area, and then went on to become the founder of America Online; a young woman who mortgaged the family house for money to start her business and now runs a major construction company; a managing partner of a baseball team—and I know how much he suffers—[*laughter*]—two well-respected leaders from my home State of Texas; a successful son of a preacher, now chairman and CEO of Lanier Worldwide, Inc.; one of you began work at age 8 to help your mother sustain the family because of illness of your father, and he is here proudly as the chairman and CEO of Fannie Mae; and finally, the CEO and president of Burger King, who experienced tough times but overcame

them with dignity. I am privileged to be here with you all. And one is not able to be here, a man I'm proud to call an ally—a fellow who, before I came, I can tell you, he voted right—[*laughter*]—and that's Senator Chuck Hagel. This is an award that all of you deserve, and we're sure honored to have you here in the White House.

It's also good to see Mrs. Ruth Peale here with us. Doctor and Mrs. Peale, I think you've been here several times before, and it is my honor to welcome you again.

It's fitting that all of you should gather in the people's house. This is the right place to honor the recipients of this award and perhaps a future President. There are quite a few Horatio Alger stories among the folks who have lived here: A small Missouri farmer who never graduated from college and spent his best years working on the farm, who would eventually lead America as it became a world power, Harry S Truman; or a poor boy from Iowa, orphaned at age 9, who as a man would save millions in Europe from starvation after two World Wars, President Herbert Hoover; a child of the frontier who would become a land surveyor, a store clerk, a lawyer, a legislator, and one day helped to free slaves and save the Union, Abraham Lincoln.

The Horatio Alger Association is dedicated to really one of the basic truths about this country, and I hope this home remains dedicated to the same truth. In America, we believe in the possibilities of every person. It doesn't matter how you start out in life; what really matters is how you live your life. That has always been our creed. It has always given hope to those who dream of a better life. And that hope has always been the source of our Nation's greatness.

At the Horatio Alger Association, you also understand how much the dream depends on education. And for that, all of us should be grateful. You promote literacy and early reading. You provide millions of dollars in scholarships based upon need and talent. You understand that the hope for a better life often begins in the classroom.

A good education can be the first real break a person gets in life. A young person might have big dreams for the future, but if he or she can't read, then the highest of hopes probably won't carry them very far.

We have a duty to every child in America to give them the best possible start in life, to make every school a place of learning and of discipline and of character. We take this responsibility seriously in our country, as we should.

But lately, we've been falling well short of our professed goals. Just today we learned the latest results from the National Assessment of Education Progress, known as the NAEP, which measures reading skills amongst our fourth graders. Unfortunately, the test reveals no progress at all amongst children in need of help. And it shows a further widening of the gap between the highest and lowest performing students. The highest scores are higher; the lowest scores are lower. Good students are scoring better; struggling students are struggling more. This is not acceptable.

The NAEP provides an important service. It shows us where the need is greatest amongst our students. And these results point out, once again, the need for a strong emphasis on early reading. The budget I submitted to Congress would accomplish this with a Reading First Program and reformed Title I programs. My budget gives the highest priority to education with an 11.5 percent increase in overall funding. It triples the current spending on reading and early detection of children facing reading difficulties.

The House and Senate are working closely to pass a budget with this kind of focus. I applaud them for their efforts. It's important that we work together, because reading is what really turns children into students. It is the most basic of all basics. That was true in the 19th century, when

Horatio Alger lived, and it's just as true for children today. His stories call to mind an era very distant from ours, and they were just stories, but they had a point, and they showed young readers the way.

Such stories are still being written in America, in every town and city, every day, and in real life. Today we recognize 10 such lives, the example they set and the promise they hold for others to follow. And it is my honor to honor them.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:03 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to H. Wayne Huizenga, president and CEO, Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans, who introduced the President; 2001 Horatio Alger Award winners Marvin A. Pomerantz, James V. Kimsey, Linda G. Alvarado, Stephen G. Schott, Archie W. Dunham, Bill Greehey, Wesley E. Cantrell, Franklin D. Raines, John H. Dasburg, and Chuck Hagel; and Ruth Stafford Peale, association member and widow of association founder Norman Vincent Peale. The President also referred to Title I of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law No. 103–382), which amended Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Public Law No. 89–10).

Statement on Senate Action on Federal Budget Legislation
April 6, 2001

I want to say I've got a little news I'd like to report. I'm really pleased to report that the United States Senate just moments ago passed a budget that funds our Nation's priorities and allows for over $1.2 trillion of meaningful, real tax relief for the American people.

The House has already passed $1.6 trillion of tax relief. Now the House and Senate will work to find common ground between these two budget plans, and the result will be the largest tax relief in decades. The fact that both Houses of Congress have committed to provide significant relief is good for the American people, and it's good for the economy.

When the House and Senate complete their work, they will have paved the way so the American people can receive an across-the-board income tax reduction, a doubling of the child credit, relief from the marriage penalty, and the elimination of the death tax. This budget also wisely increases spending on education, funds priorities like Medicare and Social Security, and pays down a record amount of debt.

I applaud today's action and congratulate the Republicans and Democrats who helped make it happen.

Remarks on Repair of the Daniel Webster Hoan Bridge in Milwaukee, Wisconsin
April 6, 2001

How are you all today? It's good to be here. I'm pleased to be here with Governor McCallum and the mayor of Milwaukee; Secretary Mineta and Secretary Thompson, former Governor of the great State of Wisconsin.

I'm looking forward to tossing out the first ball today. I haven't decided if I'm going to go with a rising fastball, a splitfinger, or a breaking pitch. [*Laughter*] But nevertheless, it's going to be a great honor to be there. Miller Park will be a proud part of Milwaukee's landscape.

But there is another key structure that is an important part of the life of this city, the Daniel Webster Hoan Bridge. For the last several months, a lot of effort has gone into helping repair the Hoan Bridge, but the job is not yet complete. So I'm here to tell the good people of Milwaukee that fixing the Hoan Bridge is a priority of my administration.

I've brought along the Secretary of Transportation here to identify the quickest way to rebuild this critical artery for Milwaukee. The Hoan Bridge is eligible for funding from the Department of Transportation. We look forward to partnering with the State of Wisconsin to complete the rebuilding of the Hoan Bridge.

Today Secretary Mineta and I have received an application for Federal funds from the Governor of Wisconsin, and I plan to make this project an important priority. Almost 100,000 people live in areas directly served by the Hoan Bridge, and because of its limited capacity and weight restrictions, many commuters and shippers must find alternate routes. We are committed to helping Wisconsin take care of this problem.

Secretary Mineta and I recognize that maintaining the infrastructure of our cities is a vital role for Government. I'm glad we can be of assistance to the citizens of Wisconsin.

Thank you very much. See you at the ballpark.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:08 p.m. at General Mitchell International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Scott McCallum of Wisconsin and Mayor John O. Norquist of Milwaukee.

Message on the Observance of Passover
April 6, 2001

I am pleased to send warm greetings to Jews around the world celebrating the Passover holiday, beginning at sundown on April 7. As you gather with family and friends, eat traditional foods, and sing joyous songs, you follow in the footsteps of your forefathers in remembering the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt nearly 3,500 years ago.

During this season of renewal, the Passover holiday commemorates the liberation of the Jewish people from slavery. Through the years, Jewish sages have taught that the lesson of freedom found in the miracle of Passover has two important aspects. The first is the escape from physical bondage and the regaining of dignity and equality by the individual and by a people. Equally important is spiritual liberation from selfish desires and destructive habits.

The flight from slavery led quickly to Mount Sinai and the Holy One's gift of the Commandments to Moses and the Israelites. They were then fully free to follow the Creator's laws in striving to perfect their own lives and the world in which they lived. The connection between freedom from bondage and the gift of the Commandments enhances Passover's abiding influence, not only as a Jewish holiday, but also as an inspiration to all mankind.

Laura joins me in sending best wishes for a joyous and memorable holiday observance.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The President's Radio Address
April 7, 2001

Good morning. This weekend Congress begins its Easter recess. Senators and Members of the House of Representatives return home to meet with their constituents and listen to the people. I hope they'll listen carefully; there are large decisions that must be made when Congress returns.

I have sent Congress an education reform plan that offers greater Federal support to schools but requires higher standards and improved accountability, and I have sent Congress a tax plan that will accelerate our economic growth and leave more money with the people who earned it. Passing these two measures will be a long process that will require many votes in Congress. But the choices Congress makes will shape our country for decades. The tax plan I sent to Congress will help ensure that our children will grow up in a country bustling with opportunities. My education plan prepares our children to take advantage of those opportunities.

These are not routine votes. They are not ordinary business. They are decisions that we cannot afford to get wrong. Important reform is never easy, and it will always be tempting to postpone it. On education, there are some interest groups who don't like the idea of changes. On taxes, there are powerful institutions in Washington that would prefer to keep the people's money for themselves. But I'm committed to moving forward.

The old saying goes: The President proposes; Congress disposes; but in the end, the people rule. If we want higher educational standards, if we're to pass a substantial tax cut, the people must make their voices heard. Many of you have already telephoned your Members of Congress or sent letters and e-mails expressing your support for my education and tax plans, and I want to thank you for doing that. I hope you'll keep it up.

The crucial votes on education and taxes are still ahead, and many Members of Congress are still making up their minds. Don't just send them what you earn; tell them what you think. So I have a suggestion: During the recess, many Members of Congress will be holding townhall meetings, where constituents are welcome to come and express their views. You can find a list of these townhalls at www.bushtaxrelief.com. If your Congressman has a townhall scheduled, I hope you'll consider attending it. Maybe you might want to bring a relative or a friend.

And I hope that if you do go, you'll stand up and let your representative hear from you on school reform and tax relief. It's good citizenship, and it will make a big difference.

Before I close, let me send my best wishes to all who will be sitting down tonight to their Passover seder.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10 a.m. on April 6 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 7. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 6 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Statement on the Helicopter Crash in Vietnam
April 7, 2001

Laura and I were deeply saddened to learn of the crash this morning in central Vietnam of a helicopter carrying 16 people, including 7 U.S. military personnel, who were on an important mission to find and recover the remains of servicemen missing from the Vietnam war. The families of the service personnel lost in today's tragic accident know better than most the contribution their loved ones made in bringing closure to scores of families across America. Today's loss is a terrible one for our Nation. Although not lost in a hostile act, like those for whom they search, they too have lived lives of great consequence, answering a calling of service to their fellow citizens. As we enter a period of religious holidays across America, may we remember their sacrifice and keep them and their families in our thoughts and prayers.

Remarks Prior to a Cabinet Meeting and an Exchange With Reporters
April 9, 2001

Federal Budget

The President. Good morning. I'm discussing the budget we're sending to the Hill today with my Cabinet. It's a budget that protects taxpayers, protects children, protects our surplus. It represents compassionate conservatism. It's a budget that sets priorities. It's a budget that recognizes there are some good programs here in Washington that need to be funded.

For example, the budget provides a $21 million increase for food safety programs, $1 billion increase for Pell grants for low-income students, $350 million increase for childcare. We help children whose parents are in prison with a $67 million mentoring program. We increase funding available to prevent child abuse by 66 percent. We fight crime—$87 million increase for front-line prosecutors. We give $75 million for Project Child Safe, which is a program that provides gun safety locks for families. It fights corporate subsidies. It eliminates thousands of one-time earmarked projects.

Washington is known for pork. This budget funds our needs without the fat. It also represents a new way of doing business in Washington and a new way of thinking. The budget puts the taxpayers first, and that's exactly where they belong.

I'll be glad to answer questions.

U.S. Navy Aircraft Incident

Q. Mr. President, members of your administration expected the crew to be freed over the weekend. At this point, how can you not agree with Chairman Hyde that they are hostages?

The President. First, I just talked to General Sealock, who had a good visit with all 24 crewmembers. His report is that their spirits are very high, that they're doing well, and that's good news. Secondly, all of us around this table understand diplomacy takes time. But there is a point—the longer it goes—there's a point at which our relations with China could become damaged.

Q. Is there any more that you can do or say, sir?

The President. Every day that goes by increases the potential that our relations with China could be damaged. And our hope is that this matter gets resolved quickly.

Q. Is there anything else you can do? You said a week ago that it's time for them to come home. They're still not home.

What else can the President of the United States do to bring our people home?

The President. We're working behind the scenes. We've got every diplomatic channel open. We're in discussions with the Chinese. It is now time for our troops to come home so that our relationship does not become damaged.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:15 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Brig. Gen. Neal Sealock, USA, U.S. Embassy Defense Attache in Beijing. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Following Discussions With King Abdullah II of Jordan and an Exchange With Reporters
April 10, 2001

President Bush. I'm going to have an opening statement. His Majesty will have an opening statement. I'll be glad to take a couple of questions from the American press. His Majesty will take a couple of questions from the Jordanian press, and we'll alternate.

It's my honor to welcome the Majesty to the Oval Office, to our country. We had a very good lunch. We discussed a lot of subjects, starting with how best to work together to lay the foundation for peace in the Middle East. We had a very good discussion about trade, and I explained to His Majesty that ours is a country that believes in free trade.

We look forward to working to get an agreement, one way or the other, out of our Congress that encourages free trade with Jordan. We will be discussing strategies as how best to achieve that objective, but the objective is for there to be a free trade agreement between our countries.

His Majesty is one of the young leaders of the Middle East who has got a good vision for peace. And I look forward to his advice and counsel and working closely together to achieve peace. So welcome, Your Majesty.

King Abdullah. Thank you very much, sir. Mr. President, as you said, we had a very warm and constructive discussions today about not only bilateral relations but that of the region. And I believe that we're both committed to finding peace and stability in our part of the world. We're very grateful for all the support that we've had from your country over the years. And I look forward to working with you, sir, and with your administration to try and bring peace and stability to the Middle East.

President Bush. Thank you, sir.

U.S. Navy Aircraft Incident

Q. Your Majesty, with apologies, because there's another subject on everybody's mind—Mr. President——

President Bush. What might that be?

Q. Well, it's the China problem. What is it going to take to resolve that? Have you considered dealing directly with the President of China?

President Bush. We are working hard to resolve the situation. The first piece of news I have to report is, I talked to the General, Sealock, again. He met with our folks in Hainan Island. He reported that spirits are high, that the troops are patient. He informed us that there is an exchange of e-mails between the—our troops and their families, which is—I found to be an important piece of news, that the families will be able to talk to each other.

Diplomacy sometimes takes a little longer than people would like. I urge the

Chinese to bring resolution to this issue. It's time for our people to come home.

Q. Mr. President, what about the issue with Jesse Jackson? Mr. President, what about the issue with Reverend Jesse Jackson? He says if China lets him in, he will go there to help free the 24 detainees.

President Bush. We are—there's a lot of people that are anxious for this situation to end. I appreciate the good will of a lot of Americans that are concerned about our folks in Hainan Island. This administration is doing everything we can to end the stalemate in an efficient way. We're making the right decisions to bring the solution to an end.

Q. Do you support Reverend Jackson? Do you support——

Q. Mr. President, you said a moment ago——

President Bush. This is a Jordanian reporter.

Q. Mr. President, you said a moment ago that diplomacy takes longer than sometimes people would like. Are you trying to prepare the American people for an extended and prolonged stay of this 24-member crew in Chinese captivity?

President Bush. No. I am making it clear to the Chinese that it's in their nation's interests to end this situation as quickly as possible. As all members of my administration have been saying, that the longer this goes, the more likely it is that it could—could—jeopardize relations, and we certainly don't want that to happen.

Q. Mr. President——

President Bush. Is there anybody from the Jordanian——

Q. The West Bank——

President Bush. Yes, ma'am?

Middle East

Q. A Jewish spiritual leader yesterday called upon killing all Arabs, and we are seeing Israel launching an unannounced, full-scale war against Palestinians. Is your country going to use or veto another proposal at the United Nations to send an international protection force?

President Bush. Our country is very interested and working with all parties to—for parties to lay down their arms. The only—wait, let me——

Q. Your Majesty, can you state specifically what you think——

President Bush. I'm not quite through yet——

Q. Sorry.

President Bush. And then you're next.

Q. Thank you.

President Bush. In order for there to be discussions that will lead to peace, first and foremost, the violence must stop. And we're working hard to convince the parties to stop the violence. His Majesty and I talked about how best that all countries, peaceful countries in the region can discourage violent activities. And the Secretary of State and—has been on the phone recently with the leaders in the Middle East to make sure that they understand the U.S. position is for the violence to stop.

Q. Your Majesty, can you say specifically, beyond rhetorical tools, what Jordan and the United States can do to stop the violence, bring it down, restore calm?

King Abdullah. Well, I think the situation at present is, try to find a way of deescalating the violence. There has been meetings between the Israelis and the Palestinians as early as last week which produced some results. And I think we need to be able to build on that.

President Bush. Thank you all. Look what you started. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:06 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Brig. Gen. Neal Sealock, USA, U.S. Embassy Defense Attache in Beijing. Reporters referred to President Jiang Zemin of China; civil rights leader Rev. Jesse Jackson; and Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef, founder, Shas. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks in a Discussion on Character-Building Programs in Education
April 10, 2001

The President. Thank you all. Mr. Secretary, thank you very much. Mr. Mayor, thank you very much for being here. I'm glad to see you. And I'm glad to see the superintendent. I appreciate you all being here. This is not the first time I've been with the Mayor, nor with the superintendent, both of whom are doing a fine job for Washington, DC. I'm proud to call this place home, and I'm proud to have you all leading the city and the school district.

I want to thank the members of the Young Gentlemen's Club for being here, and I'm looking forward to shaking your hand after the discussion. And thank you all for making the right choices in life. I want to thank our panelists. I look forward to hearing from our panelists.

I want to start the discussion by quoting Martin Luther King, Jr., who said this: "Intelligence is not enough. Intelligence plus character, that is the goal of true education." So we're here today to herald character-building programs. We're here today to recommend that throughout America we teach values to our children, that we not only teach our children how to read and write but that we be bold enough to teach them the difference between right and wrong, as well. And we've picked a pretty darn good school as an example.

By the way, I found this, that one of the keys to success in our public education is to have good, strong principals. So Annie, thank you for being here. I'm looking forward to hearing from you.

One of the keys to success is to have role models not only live a quality life but be willing to take time out of their lives to share their experiences. So I'm pleased to have a star basketball player with us here.

One of the keys to success is to find people who are willing to use their intelligence to rally people of compassion to serve as mentors and role models for children—young ladies, in this case. And so I'm so pleased that Elayne Bennett is here.

One of the keys to success is being a good mom. And so I'm so thankful you're here, Nicole.

One of the keys to success is to be willing to listen to what the adults say. And so Isaiah, thank you for being here, as well.

And finally, it is an honor that Mr. Bob Howard is with us, a person who has taken time out of his life to make sure that the Young Gentlemen's Club flourishes.

Parents have a tough battle in America today. Their children sometimes receive conflicting messages, and what public education ought to do is stand on the side of parents and be willing to reinforce the values that parents teach their children. And the Young Gentlemen's Club does just that. And so I'm looking forward to hearing the stories. I'm looking forward to hearing how best I can help.

One way we can help, by the way, is to have our budgets reflect our priorities. And the budget I submitted to the Congress triples the amount of character-education money available for public education. The budget I submitted to the Congress increases the amount of money available for abstinence education programs. And the money and program I've submitted to the Congress encourages after-school programs to be run by faith-based and community-based programs that exist because they've heard the universal call to love a neighbor just like they'd like to be loved themselves.

We can make a huge difference in the lives of America's children. It starts recognizing that society's changed one child at a time; one heart, one soul, one conscience at a time. And this program, the Young Gentlemen's Club, does precisely that.

So thank you, Mr. Secretary. It's an honor. And thank you all for coming.

[*The discussion proceeded.*]

The President. Let me say one thing, Mr. Secretary. To prove the principal's point, they use a Stanford 9 here in the District of Columbia. Many of you know that I'm a strong advocate for accountability. If you don't measure, you don't know. And so under the leadership of the superintendent, there's a lot of measuring that goes on. It's really important to measure, by the way, and I hope the Congress gets the message how important it is that in return for more money, we need to have strong accountability systems developed at the local level.

Cleveland Elementary School, on the Stanford 9, is on par with affluent local suburban districts. In other words, it's not just talking the talk; the results have improved significantly as a result of character programs and focus on each child.

And I want to thank you for your hard work, Madam Principal, and the results bear out what you just said. There is a connection between good character and good education. And we've got to remember that in this country. That's why it's important to spread character-education programs throughout America.

[*The discussion continued.*]

The President. I think we've got a perfect gentleman here. Tell us about your program, Isaiah, can you?

Third Grade Student Isaiah Greene. Yes. The program teaches us how to be—how to respect women and how to control our attitude.

The President. And when do you meet? How often do you meet?

Isaiah Greene. When I was there, we used to meet in the afternoons.

The President. Oh, good. And so who is—teaches you how to respect women? Is that what you just said? And is it working?

Isaiah Greene. Yes. [*Laughter*]

The President. How about Mom?

Isaiah Greene. Yes.

The President. You listen to your mom?

Isaiah Greene. Yes.

The President. I listen to mine. [*Laughter*] How about you, Mom?

[*The discussion continued.*]

The President. Is he studying?

Nicole Keller. He's studying hard. He's very——

The President. That's great.

Ms. Keller. ——excited about his schoolwork and all that he does.

The President. He's going to college, isn't he?

Ms. Keller. That's right. Yes, he is.

The President. Have you got anything to add to that, Isaiah? [*Laughter*]

[*The discussion continued.*]

The President. Well, I want to thank our panelists. I believe America can conquer any problem we're faced with. I truly believe that, because this is a loving country. There's a lot of people who really care about members of the Young Gentlemen's Club, whether it be at Cleveland Elementary or any other elementary. There are a lot of people who really care about their neighbor in this country.

All of us have got to do our part. The Federal Government can put money up, but we can't make people love one another. And that's something we've just got to understand in our country, that we can fund programs—and we will. There will be a lot of discussions about what gets funded and what doesn't get funded, and this, that, and the other. But the truth of the matter is, the issue is bigger than budgets. The issue is about whether or not loving people in America want to help somebody in need.

And I think so. And to the extent that you all are helping, I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart. One of my missions is to encourage mentoring programs all across the country. One of our missions is to make sure that boys and girls

whose mother or dad may be in prison finds a mentor, somebody to love them. One of our missions is to teach—is to help teach children right from wrong so that they can enjoy the great fruits of the greatest country on the face of the Earth. And to the extent you're helping, I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Thank you all for coming. I look forward to getting to shake hands with the members of the Young Gentlemen's Club, if that's okay with you.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:12 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Anthony A. Williams of Washington, DC; Paul L. Vance, superintendent, District of Columbia Public Schools; Annie R. Mair, principal, Cleveland Elementary School; NBA Washington Wizards player Jahidi White; Elayne Bennett, founder, Best Friends Program; Nicole Keller, mother of Isaiah Greene; and Robert Howard, founder, Young Gentlemen's Club.

Remarks on Plans for Release of United States Navy Aircraft Crewmembers in China

April 11, 2001

Good morning. I'm pleased to be able to tell the American people that plans are underway to bring home our 24 American service men and women from Hainan Island.

This morning the Chinese Government assured our American Ambassador that the crew would leave promptly. We're working on arrangements to pick them up and to bring them home.

This has been a difficult situation for both our countries. I know the American people join me in expressing sorrow for the loss of life of a Chinese pilot. Our prayers are with his wife and his child.

I appreciate the hard work of our Ambassador to China, Joseph Prueher, and his entire Embassy team, who worked tirelessly to solve this situation. The American people, their families, and I are proud of our crew, and we look forward to welcoming them home.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:25 a.m. in the James S. Brady Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Ruan Guoqin, widow of Chinese pilot Wang Wei, and their son, Wang Ding.

Remarks at Concord Middle School in Concord, North Carolina

April 11, 2001

Thank you all very much. Okay. "Dr. O," thank you for your hospitality. It's an honor to be here. I want to thank you all for coming.

Before I talk about a subject dear to my heart, which is education, and before I recognize all the distinguished guests, I do want to say that right after my visit here, I am going to meet with the family of Petty Officer Third Class Steven Blocher. As you know, Steven is one of our 24 service men and women in China.

I'm really looking forward to letting Steven's family know that we're in the process of bringing their son home. Steven grew up in Charlotte, and I know this entire Charlotte area and I know this entire community joins in looking forward to welcoming him home.

I'm grateful for the opportunity to tell the Blochers how much America appreciates their son's patriotism and service to his country and how much we appreciate the service of our men and women in uniform throughout the world. Situations such as this remind us how much our military personnel and their families sacrifice for our freedom. It also reminds me, it's such an honor to be the Commander in Chief of such wonderful people.

It's also an honor to be here in the great State of North Carolina. I've got a lot of friends here, and I'm grateful. It's also good to get out of Washington, DC, on a regular basis. It kind of reminds us that there is—it helps us stay in touch with reality. It's important to listen to people who are on the frontlines of making their communities a much better place. And there's no better place to listen and to say thanks than our schools all across America, where people are working their heart out to make a difference in the lives of our children. So first, I want to thank all the teachers who are here.

I don't know if you know this—and I'm sorry the First Lady is not with us. She's heading down to Texas for the Easter break. I'm following shortly thereafter, I want you to know. [*Laughter*] One of her missions, besides making sure every child can read, is to remind folks about how important it is and what an important profession teaching is, that teaching is a noble profession, and that for the youngsters who are looking for something to do after college: Become a teacher. Or for those who have just gotten out of the military: Become a teacher.

We need good teachers in America. We need people to understand what an important job it is. So for those of you who are thinking about something to do when you get out of junior high, then high school, then college, give teaching a shot. It will not only change some child's life; it will change your life for the better, as well.

It's good to see Phil Kirk. Phil, thank you very much. I was honored to be escorted around the school by a man I proudly called "Mr. President," Graham Boone. I appreciate Senator Edwards being here. Senator, it's good to see you, sir. I appreciate Congressman Hayes. I can assure you, on the ride in from the airport, he gave me a full briefing—[*laughter*]—about every single aspect of this community. He pointed out every NASCAR garage and every four-lane highway that needed to be expanded. [*Laughter*]

Congressmen Coble, Ballenger, and Taylor are also here. I want to thank you all for coming, and I appreciate your loyal support. I guess when the President shows up, all kinds of elected officials come, and I appreciate your coming. The mayors, the mayor of Charlotte and the mayor of Concord, I want to thank you both for being here, as well.

It's good to see Mike Ward again. I saw Mike just the other day. Thank you, Mike. And it's good to have members of the statehouse, the speaker and the leader of the Senate, on both sides of the aisle. It reminds me, seeing both Republicans and Democrats from the statehouse here, that when it comes to education, there really isn't—there isn't a need for partisan bickering. When it comes to the education of the children, it is right for people of both parties to come together and figure out how to get the job done. And that's what's happened here.

I know that's what's happened here in North Carolina. It also happened in the State of Texas when I was the Governor—that we said we'll have our time for political bickering, but when it comes to important issues like education, we'll set aside political

bickering and focus on the children. And as a result of people from both parties being able to work together in our respective States, North Carolina and Texas have made great progress.

I know that some other States don't like to hear this, but at one point in time, the National Education Goals Panel analyzed which of the States in the United States were making the greatest gains on student achievement. And it turned out our States were, North Carolina and Texas. And I attribute that to the fact that people from both political parties were willing to work together—something Washington, DC, needs more of, by the way. We need less name-calling and finger-pointing and more focus on what's right for America. And a good place to start is when it comes to the education of our children.

Now, there's another reason why our States did well. It's because we adopted a philosophy that makes sense. It starts with setting high expectations for every child. Ours are States that have said, every child can learn. We're not one of these States that said, some of the children can learn, or maybe a handful of the children can learn. We started with the philosophy that every child can learn—and that's the right attitude to take—and also a philosophy that said, we're going to set high standards for every child. Not high standards for suburbia or high standards for inner city—high standards for every child is part of our political philosophy.

Oh, I know there are difficult circumstances. But that is not an excuse to lower standards. You see, if you lower standards, you get lower results. If you set the bar low, you're going to get results that are not satisfactory for having a tomorrow that we want for every child. So the first part of our common philosophy says, we're going to set high standards and high expectations and believe that every child can learn.

Secondly, our States believe in local control of schools. That's something the Federal Government needs to learn. It needs to learn to trust the people of North Carolina when it comes to running the schools of North Carolina. This idea of Washington making decisions on behalf of the people of North Carolina has got to end, in order to make sure that every child gets educated in America.

One of the things I look forward to working with the Congress on is to explain to those who don't quite understand that all knowledge doesn't exist in Washington; that in order to have excellence in our schools, we've got to trust local people. And I mean we need to pass power out of Washington, DC, to empower the Governors and local school boards to make the right decisions for the children in their respective States, because one size does not fit all when it comes to the education of the American children.

And finally, the cornerstone of reform for North Carolina and for Texas and for other States is the willingness of our States to measure, is to say accountability is an incredibly important part of educational excellence. Now, in your State of North Carolina, you measure three through eight. In my State of Texas, we do the same thing. And that's exactly the cornerstone of reform necessary. Do you know why? Because if you do not measure, you do not know whether or not children are learning. And if you don't know, it's likely certain children will be moved just right through the system.

It's so easy to quit on certain children. It's so easy to quit on children whose parents may not speak English as a first language. It's so easy to quit on a child; you take a look and say, "This child is too hard to educate, so we'll just move him or her through." That is unacceptable to me. I know it's unacceptable to you, and it needs to be unacceptable to all Americans. Every child matters; every child can be educated; and we must quit this business of just simply giving up on children early, before it's too late.

And the structural reform necessary to make sure that doesn't happen is to measure, is to say—ask ourselves: Can a child read at grade level, say, by the third grade? And if we find out the answer is no, then do something about it early, before it's too late. I strongly believe in accountability.

In the budget I submitted to the Congress, one which one body of the House listened to pretty carefully, and—one body of the Congress listened to carefully, and the other decided, well, they're going to listen to some of it, but they decided to increase the size and scope of the Federal Government—we put a lot of money in for public education. The biggest increase of any Department was for public education.

We increased the size of the reading initiative by threefold. Because I understand that reading is the gateway to knowledge—and that's nothing new; all Members of Congress understand that—I did want there to be a priority in the budget for reading. They said, "If the States wants to access Federal money, you should be able to do so, but make sure you have K-through-2 diagnostic tools available so that we can have meaningful early childhood reading initiatives; make sure you understand that if the curriculum doesn't work, that you're bold enough to change it, and therefore, access some of the money to train teachers on curriculum that do work; make sure that you have intensive reading academies so that no child gets left behind when it comes to reading."

We've tripled the amount of money for States, if they so choose to use that, because—I know this is obvious, unfortunately sometimes—but it reflects reality, and it reflects some of the problems we have that if you can't read, you can't learn other subjects. And unfortunately, too many of our children can't read. I'm a first-things-first person. Let's get the reading right, and I'm confident the math and science will follow thereafter. I do know if they can't read, it's going to be hard to master science. So there's the focus on reading. And I know your State will take advantage of the Federal monies if I can get it passed out of the Congress—I think we're going to, by the way—to make sure every child learns to read in your great State.

Secondly, it's one thing to teach a child to read and write, but in order to make sure education is full and complete, we also must teach our children right from wrong. We triple the amount of money in the budget for character education programs. We should not be afraid to teach children what's right and what's wrong. And we should not be afraid in our society to teach children the values which have stood the test of time: Don't lie, cheat, and steal; honor thy parents; show respect; be responsible for the decisions you make in life. And I also believe that, along those lines, we ought not to be afraid to teach abstinence to our children. So I've increased abstinence funding in the budget, as well.

Now, we increase spending. Now, there's some hollering we didn't increase it enough and some saying too much, and of course, imagine the President thinks it's just right. But it's one thing to spend money, but it's another thing to make sure the systems work, too.

As you know, particularly in your State, there's more than just spending money to education. It is important to get it right. And that's why I urge the Congress to hear the message of accountability and local control.

Part of the reform package that is being debated in the Senate and the House is to pass power out of Washington, is the best way to put it; is to make sure the Federal money that is spent is not so tied up that local folks can't use it to meet their own specific needs; is to trust the local people. It's an inherent principle of good public policy in Washington: Always remember to trust the local people. Why? Because government closer to the people

is that which is most responsive. The government which get far away from the people sometimes doesn't hear the real voice, doesn't respond, may get caught up in special interests or the folks that surround the Nation's Capital.

And so we've got to trust people. And so inherent in the plan is to say to the Congress, "Work with us to pass power out of Washington. And let's not be afraid to do so." And I think we're making good progress on that. I think many of the Members of the Congress and the Senate understand that principle.

And I'm asking Congress to say, "If you receive Federal money, you must develop an accountability system like North Carolina has done." In return for taxpayers' money, to me it makes sense to ask the question, what are the results? If you receive Title I money in the State around the country—in one of our States in our country, you've got to measure. You've got to show us. I don't believe there ought to be a national test. I strongly resist a national test. A national test would undermine the development of local curriculum, for example. A national test could really mean the National Government ends up running—begins to dictate policies for our schools, and that's not right.

But I think it's responsible and wise and appropriate to say that if you receive help from the Federal Government, you develop an accountability system, and you measure. And you disaggregate results; you don't lump people into groups so we don't know. Each child matters.

You see, it is incredibly important for this country to change our mentality about education. Instead of asking the question, "How old are you," we need to start asking the question, "What do you know?" Instead of saying, "Oh, you're 10, and you go here; and you're 12, you go here; or you're 16, we'll just put you here"—it's time for this country, all across the land, to start asking the question, "What do you know?" And if you don't know what you're supposed to know, we'll make sure you do early, before it's too late.

That's what accountability will do for our country. It begins to change the mentality. It recognizes you can't correct problems unless you know there is a problem. And so I hope the Members of the House and the Members of the Senate do not blink when it comes to insisting that local jurisdictions develop strong accountability systems. It's so important. It's so important if we want to make sure that no child gets left behind.

And by the way, in order for there to be accountability that works, there must be a consequence for success and a consequence for failure. There is no such thing as an accountability system unless something happens with success and failure. I believe we ought to reward success, and I believe, after a reasonable period of time, if a school will not teach and it will not change, something else must happen. And we're having a big debate on what the something else is in the Nation's Capital. There's a big debate on that.

But one thing is for certain: I will not accept a plan that accepts failure, because our children are too important. One thing is for certain: People must be given different options if their children are in schools that simply won't adjust. It's time for us to have strong accountability measures and local control in our schools.

People talk about parental involvement. All of us are for parental involvement, of course. It will make the teachers' job so much easier when parents get involved. But there's nothing like parental involvement when we start posting scores on the Internet. There's nothing like parental involvement when we break down accountability on a child-per-child basis. There's nothing like getting a mother fired up when she sees the fact that her school may not be performing quite like she thought it was going to be. Accountability is not only good for the children; it's good for parents, as well.

And it turns out it's good for schools. It's good for schools. It's good to know. It's good to know whether a curriculum is working or not. It's good to know whether the methodology that's being used within the classrooms makes sense. It's good to know.

And when we start to measure, we're going to start saying for certain, every child matters in America. And when we start to correct—when we start to correct, we're going to make certain that every child is educated, and our country is going to be better off for it.

There's a lot of things I want to do in Washington. As you know, I'm committed to making sure that once we meet our priorities, that our Government always remembers who funds the Government; that it's not the Federal Government's money; it's the people's money.

We're making progress. Oh, some folks are kicking and screaming, but we're making some progress toward remembering whose money it is. But we're making good progress on education, as well, and I'm grateful. I'm grateful when a President Bush can sit down with a Senator Kennedy and have a meaningful, real dialog on what's right for the country. I'm grateful for that.

One of my missions was to try to change the tone of Washington. You see, Washington is zero-sum game up there. There are people up there that say, "We can't support this because it means somebody wins and, therefore, somebody loses." It means that we're not focused on the right reason, the reason we're there as people. And we may have a disagreement, but we've got to get rid of the zero-sum politics that dominates the discourse in our Nation's Capital. We're there to serve.

And the best way to convince people to serve is to change the tone from one of suspicion to respect. And as you can imagine, Senator Kennedy and I don't get along on a lot of issues, but we get along—I respect him as a person. I respect his professionalism. And I respect the fact that he's willing to sit down and see if my office and me, we can't work out differences that may exist when it comes to educating children. It's a good step in the right direction.

I think the tone in Washington is beginning to change for the better. I know we're beginning to have a new culture of accomplishment take hold, that instead of everybody focusing on process and who's saying what about who, that we're beginning to focus on results.

I want this country to be a results-oriented country, starting at the national level. We ought to be focusing on results—particularly when it comes to education of children. And if they're good, let's praise everybody. And if they're bad, let's praise them, but let's fix it. So we're making progress in the Nation's Capital.

And finally, I think I'm making pretty good progress—I hope I am—on convincing people that it's not only important to educate our children; it's important to welcome faith-based and community-based programs and to stay-after-school programs, so that children understand that somebody loves them and somebody cares. That is so important.

I think we're making pretty good progress on the so-called Faith-Based Initiative, that makes it clear that government is limited. I mean, government can't make people love one another. If it could, I'm sure that Senator Edwards would sponsor it, and I would sign it if we could figure out how to do that.

But the role of government is limited. Oh sure, we can fund and we can tax and maybe not tax so much. And of course, we can keep the peace. But what government cannot do is cause people to love one another. What government cannot do is to understand the great power of faith and concern and love. We can rally faith and concern and love. We can encourage programs based upon faith, concern, and

love, and we must. But we can't make people love one another. That comes from institutions that rely upon a greater power; that comes from churches and synagogues and mosques. It comes from mentoring programs based upon the idea of some soul, some good, decent American saying, "What can I do to help make my society a better place?"

I love coming outside the Nation's Capital, because it gives me a chance to see Americans line the road, saluting the institution of the Presidency as I drive by. And it reminds me every time, every trip, that the strength of this country lies not in the halls of our Government; the strength of this country lies in the hearts and souls of the citizens of the greatest land on the face of the Earth.

I think we're making progress. We understand where the power of this country lays. It lays in the hearts and souls of Americans. It must lay in our pocketbooks. It lays in the willingness for people to work hard. But as importantly, it lays in the fact that we've got citizens from all walks of life, all political parties, that are willing to say, "I want to love my neighbor. I want to make somebody's life just a little bit better." And for those of you who are doing that, I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

And thank you for your warm welcome, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:55 a.m. in the gymnasium. In his remarks, he referred to Austin Obasohan, principal, and Graham Boone, student council president, Concord Middle School; Phillip J. Kirk, Jr., chairman, North Carolina State Board of Education; Mayor Patrick McCrory of Charlotte, NC; Mayor George W. Liles of Concord; Michael E. Ward, superintendent, North Carolina Public Schools; and Speaker of the House James B. Black and Senate President Pro Tempore Marc Basnight, North Carolina State Assembly. The President also referred to Title I of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law No. 103–382), which amended Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Public Law No. 89–10).

Remarks in a Meeting With the Parents of Petty Officer Third Class Steven Blocher in Concord

April 11, 2001

The President. I'm so honored that the Blocher family came to say hello. Obviously, when we were going to visit, we were just going to visit in a quiet way, a private way. Now that their son, Steven, will be coming home soon, I thought it would be appropriate for us to visit, and then visit some with the press.

These good folks are patriots, as is their son. It's a patriotic family. We had other family members served our country. Steven was one of the 24. I know they're thrilled he's coming home. But I'm so appreciative of how this family and the other families were steadfast in their patriotism and loyalty. They raised a boy who loves his country, and we owe a debt of gratitude to not only the service men and women but to their parents, as well. So that's why I wanted to see you.

Robert Blocher. This morning worked out even better than we had hoped. It's an honor to meet the President, but to meet the President under such happy circumstances was more than we could ask the Lord for in any way.

The President. It's my honor to have you all. Thanks. We're watching very carefully.

Progress is being made, and that's very good news for this group of folks.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:40 p.m. at Concord Middle School during a meeting with Robert and Sandra Blocher. Petty Officer Third Class Steven Blocher was one of 24 crewmembers of the U.S. Navy EP–3E Aries II electronic surveillance aircraft held by the Government of China after the aircraft made an emergency landing on China's Hainan Island due to a mid-air collision with a Chinese F–8 fighter jet over the South China Sea on March 31. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to the Community in Greenville, North Carolina
April 11, 2001

The President. Thank you all. Thank you very much. Okay. Richard, thank you very much for your kind hospitality. I'm proud—I am proud to be an honorary member of the East Carolina baseball team. I am proud to be on this campus. I am proud to be in East Carolina, and I'm proud I've got so many friends in this great State.

It is such an honor to be here, and I want to thank you all for coming. I understand that some good folks spent the night last night here to be here. I promise not to speak so long so you will fall asleep. [*Laughter*] But I'm really thankful that you're here. I'm thankful to be out of Washington, DC, with the good, hard-working people of this part of our country.

Release of U.S. Navy Aircraft Crewmembers in China

I'm pleased to report that a commercial charter airplane is close to landing in Hainan Island.

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

The President. The plane is expected to leave that island in a couple of hours, bound for Guam and then for Hawaii. Earlier today I had the privilege and honor to meet fellow North Carolinians Bob and Sandra Blocher, the parents of one of the 24 crewmembers, Petty Officer Third Class Steven Blocher. They are, of course, as you can imagine, thrilled to know that the service men and women are returning home.

These have been difficult days for all the families. And these days are a reminder of the sacrifices all our men and women in uniform and their family make every single day for freedom. And so we're proud and thankful for the service of folks. We're proud and thankful for their parents, and we can't wait for them to get home.

Greenville, North Carolina

I am pleased to be here with the senior Senator from the great State of North Carolina.

Audience members. Jesse! Jesse! Jesse!

The President. He's a strong ally in the United States Senate.

Audience member. Big time!

The President. I am pleased to be here—quit quoting the Vice President. The man yelled, "Big time." [*Laughter*]

I am pleased to be here with your Congressman, Walter Jones, as well as Congressmen from around your State, Howard Coble, Robin Hayes, Charles Taylor.

Let me tell you—now, you all may be aware that I laid out a budget recently. I like to call it the people's budget because it says, first and foremost, in Washington we understand that we're not spending the Government's money; we are spending the people's money. And the five people I just introduced stood strong with the people of North Carolina when they voted for a responsible budget. I can't say that was the

case for every member of the North Carolina delegation.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I just want to remind you, as these votes keep coming down, when we get to choose between bigger government and the people, you're only one e-mail away of reminding reluctant Members of the Congress that your point of view matters.

And mark my words, having been up there for a period of time, I can assure you that there is a struggle between whose money it is and where it ends up.

I want to describe to you the budget I laid out, just to put your mind at ease. We increase discretionary spending in the budget—that means programs other than entitlement programs—by 4 percent. Many of you work hard to get along, and you haven't had a 4 percent pay raise lately. Inflation is lower than 4 percent. So I thought it would be reasonable to ask the Federal Government to live on a 4 percent increase in the discretionary spending account. Four percent increase in discretionary spending increases Federal assistance to North Carolina education programs to more than $947 million a year.

A 4 percent discretionary budget means that North Carolina's Head Start Programs will receive $127 million a year. The budget provides $78 million in funding for water resource projects along North Carolina rivers and waterways. It provides a 366 percent increase of Federal monies to help conserve North Carolina natural resources. It expands the number of community health centers all across the country.

A 4 percent increase doubles the Medicare budget, so that we fulfill the promise to the elderly. A 4 percent increase helps keep priorities to the military. We must pay our military folks more money. A 4 percent increase means we're going to spend 100 billion additional dollars next year. That's a lot of money. But for those who want to increase the size and scope of the Federal Government, it's not enough.

Now, I want you all to understand where the tradeoffs come when it comes to budgeting. The money either ends up in Federal programs, or it ends up in the people's pocket. And my point of view I make in Washington and that I want you to help me on is, we can meet priorities. We can fund education and good conservation programs. We can fulfill our commitment to the elderly. We can make Social Security is safe and secure today and around tomorrow for the younger folks. We can do all that by growing the discretionary account at 4 percent and still have meaningful tax reductions.

So when somebody tells you, when you hear the excuse, "Oh, we're not meeting our needs," you need to get them to look at the numbers; you need to get them to understand what a 4 percent growth means. You also ought to remind them that if they do what some in the Senate want done—which is to grow the budget 8 percent—we're going to roar right through any projected surplus.

If we grow that budget 8 percent, we come from the school of thought that it's going to serve as a huge drag on our economy. You see, there's tradeoffs that have to be realized. The tradeoff—the fundamental tradeoff, though, is who do we trust? Who do we trust with the money? Do we trust the Government, or do we trust the people?

Audience members. The people!

The President. That's what this debate is about. That's what the fundamental debate is about.

Now, I can remember campaigning all across the States, like Carolina, and people kept saying during the course of the campaign, "Oh, he's just talking, because there's not going to be any tax relief; the people don't want tax relief." I kept saying, "Well, you may be talking to different people I am." Everywhere I went, once I could convince the people that we'd meet the

basic needs of Government, people seemed to understand that they'd want some of their money back. That's what they seemed to understand.

But the skeptics, they weren't listening. The skeptics weren't listening. But let me tell you where we are. Because of the hard work of the North Carolina congressional delegation, we passed $1.6 trillion of tax relief. The Senate is at $1.2 trillion of tax relief. Now, they are trying to reconcile the differences, but either way you cut it, tax relief is on the way.

And I want to remind you all, it has nothing to do about me. It's everything to do about the people. That's what this is all about. This is the people's budget. It's the people's budget. The tax relief plan that I hope is finally adopted must incorporate these principles. One, anybody who pays taxes ought to get relief. Some of the good folks in Washington, DC, they support what they call targeted tax relief.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. That means some people are targeted in, and some people are targeted out. The fairest way—the fairest way—the fairest way is to say that if you pay taxes, you get relief.

So I hope the plan that says everybody that pays taxes gets relief is what ends up on my desk. I think it will, with your help. I think it will. We need to drop—I want to tell you something about the current Tax Code to make sure you understand the facts.

First of all, if you're struggling to get ahead in America, this Tax Code is unfair. It's unfair to people at the bottom end of the economic ladder, because our code is structured this way. For example, if you're a single mother in the State of North Carolina, trying to raise two children—first of all, you've got the toughest job in your State; it's the hardest work in the State of North Carolina. And by the way, for all you folks who go to East Carolina University, if you're fortunate enough to become a dad, you love your children with all your heart and all your soul; the most important job you'll ever have is to be a dad. If that lady is making $22,000 a year, she's living on the outskirts of poverty. Under the code we have today, for every additional dollar she makes or earns, she pays a higher marginal rate than someone who is Wall Street successful. And that's not right, folks. That's not what America is about, as far as we're concerned.

Our code ought to say, the harder you work, the more money you have in your pocket. This is a Tax Code that ought to make it easier for people to realize their dreams, not harder. And so, therefore, we drop the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent and increase the child credit from $500 to $1,000 per child.

We need to make the code more fair. We also need to make the code more fair to small businesses. There are 488,000 small businesses in your State of North Carolina who will benefit from tax relief when you cut marginal rates. Because the truth is, by far, the vast majority of small businesses—who, by the way, create 75 percent of the new jobs in America—they don't pay corporate income taxes; they pay personal income taxes, because they're either sole proprietorships or Subchapter S corporations. That's reality. Reality is, small-business people pay personal income tax rates. And so, when we drop the top rate from 39.6 percent to 33 percent, really what we're saying is, we want to encourage the growth of the small-business sector in America.

Oh, I've heard all the rhetoric about how only certain people benefit. But the Congress must understand the importance of small business in America, and the Congress must understand that by dropping that top rate, we stimulate growth in the private sector. The role of Government is not to create wealth; the role of Government is to create an environment in which the entrepreneur can flourish in America.

Ours is the Tax Code that penalizes marriage. And that's not fair, and that's not

right. That's bad public policy. We ought to reward marriage and family in America.

And the current Tax Code taxes people's assets twice. You see, we've got a system where folks work all their life, and they dream about passing their farm or their ranch or their small business on to a son or daughter. And yet, the Tax Code makes it difficult to do so. There are thousands of farmers and ranchers who worry about having to sell their farm or their ranch early because of the death tax. Folks, we need to get rid of the death tax in America.

You'll hear every excuse in the book about why we can't drop all rates or why the death tax, you know, can't be eliminated. But you know how I view those excuses? I view those as excuses to keep your money in Washington. That's what I view. I view those as excuses to expand the size of the Federal Government.

I'm here to tell you I've looked at the numbers. We've got enough money to meet priorities. But as important, we've got enough money to let you keep your own money, and we need to do so for two reasons. The first reason has to do with our economy. It's slowing down a little bit, and one way for us to give our economy a second wind is to give people their own money back so they can spend it in the private sector, is to cut the rate so small businesses have more cashflow to invest, is to understand that more money circulating in the private sector will create economic growth. And so tax relief is important for economic purposes.

Audience member. Retroactively?

The President. But there is—retroactively, too. It sounds like we've got an economist in the crowd, a right-thinking kind of economist. What the man is saying is, we need to get money in your pockets as quickly as possible, and we agree.

But there is a second reason why we need tax relief—a second reason why, and this comes to the heart of the debate. It has to do with people and who do we trust, and families. Today I'm proud to be joined by Larry and Kristi Bryan, right up there, and Jennifer and Jeffrey and Katie June. [*Applause*] Calm down. [*Laughter*] You didn't tell me you were going to bring your whole neighborhood.

Let me tell you why I asked them to come. Because, you know, oftentimes in the political arena, we're always talking about numbers and budgets and growth and all that business, but behind tax relief are real-life families. That's what this is all about. I hope that's the reason why everybody who decides to run for office does so, to help families, to understand the importance of people in our society.

These good folks now pay $3,570 in Federal income taxes. Under the plan that passed the House and the plan that I submitted, they would save $1,830 when this tax relief is fully implemented.

Oh, I know for some of the sophisticates, they say that's nothing. But for this family, it's a lot. And the fundamental question that I want the Members of the Congress to address when we start dealing with the people's money is, who do we want to spend that extra $1,830? That's what this debate is about, folks. Who should our Government trust? And I'm going to tell you as plainly as I can, I'd rather the Bryans be spending that money than the Federal Government.

Oh, I know some of the projects—remember, this is money after we've met basic needs. This is money after we've grown the 4 percent discretionary spending. There will be some highfalutin words and great programs. But the fundamental question is, who should our Government trust? And we need to trust the people, because the people are the great strength of America—the people of this country.

It is the people of this country that make America great. I love getting outside of Washington and traveling to places like Greenville, South—North Carolina, because I'm able——

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I caught you. [*Laughter*] I love coming to see the people—the people that line the roads, the people that are waving. That's what I love, because it reminds me of how strong this country is. It reminds me that in Greenville, North Carolina, good people live.

And why is that important? I'll tell you why it's important. Because the great hope for the country comes when people turn to a neighbor and say, "What can I do to help?"—turns to a neighbor in need. That's the strength of America. Our great strength is not necessarily found in our halls of government; it's found in hallways in schools, where teachers dedicate themselves to teaching a child. It is found in hallways of churches and synagogues, where folks hear the universal call to love a neighbor just like they would be loved themselves. No, the strength of this country—the strength of this country in the hearts and souls of our people. It's when a Boy Scout leader says to a young child—says to a young child, "You know, there's right decisions to make and wrong decisions, and I want to help you understand a right decision."

It happens when somebody—somebody takes time out of their life to mentor a child. I hope—I hope when you hear of a mentoring program right here in eastern North Carolina that you say, "I'd like to help." There are some children in our society who wonder whether or not the American Dream is meant for them. And that's going to require a loving soul, putting their arm around that child and saying, "Somebody cares about you. Somebody wants you to know that there is love in our society."

The problem is, everybody expects the Federal Government to do it. But the Governments can't make people love one another. No, Government can hand out money, but we cannot put love in people's hearts, or hope in people's lives. That's done when loving citizens take time out of their lives to help make their communities and their neighborhoods as strong as it possibly can be.

This debate in Washington, DC, on taxes is fundamental to the country. It not only talks about economic vitality, but it really speaks to—we ought to trust the people. We ought to trust the people with their own money, and we ought to trust the people of America to provide the compassion necessary to make sure this great land fulfills its promise for every citizen who is lucky enough to be an American citizen.

I'm honored that you let me come and share my hopes for our country with you. I call upon you, that when Senators start to vote, for example, on budgets, you might remind them of whose money they're spending.

And I want to conclude by telling you what a huge honor it is to be the President of the greatest land on the face of the Earth.

Thank you for coming. God bless, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:49 p.m. in Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium at East Carolina University. In his remarks, he referred to Richard Eakin, chancellor, East Carolina University.

Remarks on Parental Empowerment in Education
April 12, 2001

Thank you very much. Please, be seated.

Well, Reverend Flake, thank you very much. It's an honor to be with you again.

This city really misses Floyd Flake. But Jamaica, Queens, is better off for him being there. [*Laughter*] He's a visionary. He understands a different kind of power than politics. And the community in which he is associated is better off, and I'm honored he's here. And I want to thank all the leaders who are here, as well, and I want to thank you all for coming. I really appreciate the contributions toward educational excellence that the folks on this stage are making and that you all are making all across the country. It's an honor to have you at the White House.

I believe this—and I know we share the same principle—that no child, whatever their parents' income or whatever their background, should be condemned to a failing school. Our public schools have put generations of the disadvantaged and generations of immigrants on the path to a better life. They are essential institutions. But too many are in trouble.

Just a week ago we learned that less than a third of the Nation's fourth grade students are proficient at reading. And there is a growing gap between the highest achieving readers and those who scored the lowest on the test. Students who score in the top 10 percent of the NAEP, the National Assessment of Educational Progress exams, scored slightly higher than in 1992, while those in the bottom 10 percent scored lower.

This is a serious problem that requires serious focus and a serious effort of change. We have spent $125 billion of Title I money over 25 years, money spent on low-income students. And if the truth be told, we have little to show for it. This is not just wasted money; more importantly, it is wasted potential and wasted hope.

America's schools are increasingly separate and unequal, and that is unacceptable in our great land. We must do more than tinker around the edges. We must all come together and fight for real reform and real change. Effective education reform requires both pressure from above and competition from below. We must challenge schools with higher standards and arm parents with better options.

I'm asking that every State have a real accountability system, meaning that they test every child, every year, in grades three through eight, on the basics of reading and math. Without yearly testing, we don't know—we don't know who's falling behind and who needs help. Without yearly testing, too often we don't find failure until it is too late to fix.

One of the greatest benefits of testing is the information it gives to parents. Given that information, more parents will be involved, becoming participants, not spectators, in the education of their children. Armed with that information, parents will have leverage to force reform.

Yes, we also need to empower parents by giving them more options and more influence. And my administration, with the help of a lot of folks—some of them Republicans, a lot of them Democrats—[*laughter*]—are pushing toward that goal. I don't view this as a partisan issue. I view this as incredibly important public policy that rises above politics. People on the Hill who will decide the shape of the Federal legislation must understand that supporting parents and giving them options is not a partisan issue; it's a people issue. And here's some ideas that I hope the Congress listens to.

First, I'm an enthusiastic supporter of charter schools. Charter schools are beginning to change our understanding of public education, no question about it. These schools are public, because they're publicly funded and publicly accountable for results. The vision of parents and teachers and principals determines the rest. And the competition charter schools oftentimes provide can serve as an agent to strengthen other schools. You see, you hear a lot of talk about, well, we can't have charter schools or choice because some school is

going to be left behind. That's got it backwards. [*Laughter*] Excellence in neighborhoods means excellence in another neighborhood. It means raising the bar.

Ours is an administration that wants the Congress to provide funding to assist charter schools with startup costs, facility costs, and other needs associated with high quality schools. My budget offers 150 million in additional funding next year for the priority of encouraging the growth of charter schools all around the country.

Secondly, the education proposal I submitted to Congress gives alternatives for students trapped in persistently dangerous schools. States must report to parents whether or not the schools are safe. And if safety does not improve, students must get the option of attending another public school.

Third, Congress is considering legislation that would allow Title I funding to follow children after a failing school has failed to improve after a reasonable period of time. If a child—if a school receives Title I funding and progress is not being made—in other words, the school refuses to change; the schoolchild is trapped in failure—then the money, the Federal money attributable to that child, should follow the child. And the parent should be able to make a choice of any kind of school that he or she wants to send her child to.

I vigorously campaigned on this idea because I think it is right. And it's an idea that I remain strongly committed to. I don't believe the Federal Government should fund persistent failure. I think there's a role for Federal Government in funding education, but we need to do better than we've done in the past. We need to encourage accountability. And when we find success, we need to thank the teachers and principals. When we find failure, we must give parents different options—different options.

We've also submitted a plan to increase education savings accounts, to expand them from $500 to $5,000 a year. And parents will be able to use these funds for any educated-related expense, from kindergarten to college and beyond.

The goal of these reforms is to ensure that every child in every school receives a quality education. That's the goal. And it's time we moved beyond the old arguments and old divides to make sure that we fulfill our duty that no child in America is left behind. It is time to set aside the old partisan bickering and finger-pointing and name-calling that comes from freeing parents to make different choices for their children. We can do better in America—we can do better.

I realize that all the differences between parties and people on different sides of the choice issue will not dissolve overnight. I understand that, and so do you. But that doesn't mean we shouldn't continue to fight for good ideas and herald a philosophy that is eminently fair and hopeful and optimistic for every single child, regardless of their neighborhood or their income status.

That's what this is all about. It's really about the promise of America, what America should be about. And that's providing hope and opportunity for every single citizen, regardless of where you're from.

There are some encouraging signs; there are. Slowly but surely, people are beginning to understand the logic behind accountability, the understanding that we can't accept failure, the need to trust individuals to make right decisions for their children. Slowly but surely, people are hearing that message. And I want to thank you for your help.

I have come to realize that ordinary folks can have a big influence on the process in Washington, DC, that ours is a responsive democracy, and that you're only one e-mail away—[*laughter*]—from telling somebody how you think. And it's helpful—it's helpful. We're doing the right thing. We're doing the right thing for our country.

I believe we can get positive results out of the Congress. I believe we can make progress toward reforming a system that is working in some places and not working

in others. I know we can have quality education for every child. And when we do, this great land of ours—by the way, the greatest Nation on the face of the Earth—will be even greater. We'll be even greater.

Thank you for coming, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:35 a.m. in Presidential Hall at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to former Representative Rev. Floyd H. Flake, senior pastor, Cathedral of the Allen A.M.E. Church in Jamaica, New York. The President also referred to Title I of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law No. 103–382), which amended Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Public Law No. 89–10).

Remarks on Signing a Proclamation Commemorating the Birth of Thomas Jefferson

April 12, 2001

Good afternoon. Welcome. Welcome back, Thomas. [*Laughter*] Senator Warner and Senator Allen, it's good to see both. Congressman Goode, welcome. The first lady of the Commonwealth of Virginia, it's good to see you again. And I want to thank all the descendants of Thomas Jefferson who are here. I want to thank the Jefferson scholars who are here. I want to thank my fellow Americans who are here. Welcome to the White House.

As the White House's latest tenant, it is my pleasure to say, welcome back, Thomas Jefferson. Most people don't realize this, but Thomas Jefferson and I share a hobby: we both like to make up words. [*Laughter*] According to the Oxford English Dictionary, Mr. Jefferson contributed more new words to the language than any other U.S. President. I especially like his term for barbaric pirates, "barbaresques." [*Laughter*] I'm also impressed by his words "debarrass" and "graffage."

The other day I tried a new word for our press corps, "misunderestimate." [*Laughter*] It's not quite in Jefferson's league, but I am giving it my best shot. [*Laughter*]

As you know, I've been trying to reduce taxes. Thomas Jefferson and I agree here, as well. He warned that government must expend the public money with the same care and economy we would practice with our own and impose on our own citizens no unnecessary burdens. That's something for all of us to think about, especially Members of the House and the Senate. [*Laughter*]

Jefferson can be quoted by the hour. He lived a long time ago, yet he still speaks directly to the present. Few former Presidents survive more vividly in our memories. And we feel his presence especially strongly in this place.

This is the room where Jefferson's Secretary, as Mr. Jefferson accurately pointed out, Meriwether Lewis, had his office in his bedroom, right here in this room. And it was here he embarked on his great expedition to the Pacific.

In this house, Jefferson famously wore his carpet slippers to receive the British King's Ambassador. In the Green Room, he delighted his guests with his insights into science and philosophy and law—any subject, except what Jefferson called the hated occupation of politics.

Jefferson holds the American imagination because he articulated the American creed. We declared our independence with his words that all men are created equal and that they are endowed by their creator with unalienable rights. Jefferson is the poet laureate of American freedom.

Our world echoes with Jefferson's ideals, even though Jefferson did not always act as if they were true. The same Thomas Jefferson who wrote the original ordinance banning slavery in the Northwest Territories lived on the labor of slaves. The same Jefferson who denied racial equality spoke ringing words of equal rights. He doubted the existence of the Christian God, but he trembled for his country when he remembered that the God he doubted was just.

No wonder America sees itself in Thomas Jefferson. He was what we are: marked with faults, inspired by strong ideals.

Thomas Jefferson still inspires us. He believed that education was the key to human potential. We must be committed to educating every single child in America. His Louisiana Purchase threw open the opportunities of this vast country, and we must dedicate ourselves to extending opportunity wider and wider. Above all, Jefferson believed in liberty, in the ability of citizens to govern their own country and govern their own lives. We must always affirm this democratic faith.

Like many great men, Thomas Jefferson leaves behind a complex legacy. Tomorrow would have been his 258th birthday. On his 358th birthday, Americans will still be debating his achievements and his faults, his words and his deeds.

Perhaps the best verdict came from one of Jefferson's keenest admirers and sharpest critics, the first Republican President, Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln was invited in 1859 to come to Boston to speak at a Jefferson birthday event in that city. He was unable to attend, and so he put his thoughts in a letter.

At that time, Jefferson was a contentious name in American politics. His memory had been hijacked by slaveholders who distorted many of his deeds and most of his words. But Lincoln saw further and deeper. When the view beyond the south window was swamp and the stump of the Washington Monument, when there were no cherry blossoms, no Jefferson Memorial, no Monticello on the nickel, and no Jefferson Building for the Library of Congress, Lincoln could still see the enduring meaning of Thomas Jefferson in American and world history. Here is what he wrote:

> All honor to Jefferson, to the man who in the concrete pressure of a struggle for national independence by a single people had the coolness, forecast, and capacity to introduce into a merely revolutionary document an abstract truth, applicable to all men and at all times. And so, to embalm it there, that today and in all coming days it shall be a rebuke and a stumbling block to the very harbingers of a reappearing tyranny and oppression.

Happy birthday, Mr. Jefferson.

And now I am honored to sign a proclamation celebrating Thomas Jefferson's birth and his continuing influence on our great land.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:30 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Roxane Gilmore, wife of Gov. James S. Gilmore III of Virginia. The Thomas Jefferson Day proclamation is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks on the Return of United States Navy Aircraft Crewmembers From China
April 12, 2001

Good afternoon. A short time ago I had the opportunity to speak to the 24 members of our United States flightcrew and welcome them home to America.

I told them they represent the best of American patriotism and service to their country. They did their duty with honor and with great professionalism. They are a reminder of the debt of gratitude all Americans owe to the men and women who wear our country's uniform and who voluntarily risk their lives in the service of freedom.

We are proud of our crew. And I am glad that they will be with their families this Easter weekend.

I know I speak for all Americans in saluting their courage and the extraordinary skill of the pilot, Navy Lieutenant Osborn, who guided the severely damaged aircraft to an emergency landing that saved 24 lives.

We're looking forward to talking with the flightcrew about exactly how the accident happened. From all the evidence we have seen, the United States aircraft was operating in international airspace in full accordance with all laws, procedures, and regulations and did nothing to cause the accident.

The United States and China have agreed that representatives of our Governments will meet on April 18th to discuss the accident. I will ask our United States representative to ask the tough questions about China's recent practice of challenging United States aircraft operating legally in international airspace.

Reconnaissance flights are a part of a comprehensive national security strategy that helps maintain peace and stability in our world. During the last 11 days, the United States and China have confronted strong emotions, deeply held and often conflicting convictions, and profoundly different points of view. China's decision to prevent the return of our crew for 11 days is inconsistent with the kind of relationship we have both said we wish to have.

As we move forward, the United States and China will no doubt again face difficult issues and fundamental disagreements. We disagree on important basic issues such as human rights and religious freedom. At times, we have different views about the path to a more stable and secure Asian-Pacific region.

We have different values, yet common interests in the world. We agree on the importance of trade, and we want to increase prosperity for our citizens. We want the citizens of both our countries to enjoy the benefits of peace in the world, so we need to work together on global security problems, such as preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction.

I will always stand squarely for American interests and American values. And those will no doubt sometimes cause disagreements with China. Yet, I will approach our differences in a spirit of respect.

The kind of incident we have just been through does not advance a constructive relationship between our two countries. Both the United States and China must make a determined choice to have a productive relationship that will contribute to a more secure, more prosperous, and more peaceful world.

I know I speak for all Americans when I say "Welcome home" to our flightcrew. I want to thank the families for your patience and for your sacrifice. And I wish all my fellow Americans a rich and meaningful Easter and Passover.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:15 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his

remarks, he referred to Lt. Shane Osborn, USN.

Statement on Federal Regulations on Privacy of Medical Records
April 12, 2001

Today I directed Secretary Thompson to allow a Federal rule that will protect the privacy of medical information for millions of Americans to become effective. For the first time, patients will have full access to their medical records and more control over how their personal information will be used and disclosed. The rule also provides a clear avenue of recourse for those Americans whose medical privacy has been compromised.

This rule will help address patients' growing concerns regarding medical privacy. Although impressive advances in medicine and information technology have helped make America's health care system the best in the world, our new technologies have at times made it more difficult to protect personal medical information. I believe that we must protect both vital health care services and the right of every American to have confidence that his or her personal medical records will remain private.

I recognize that legitimate concerns have been raised about the current rule, which I share, such as parents' concern that the rule limits their right to have access to their children's medical records. I have asked Secretary Thompson to recommend appropriate modifications to the rule to address these concerns and to ensure that patients receive the highest quality of health care. Improving our health care system while protecting the confidentiality of patient records will continue to be an important goal of my administration.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Iraq's Compliance With United Nations Security Council Resolutions
April 12, 2001

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution (Public Law 102–1), and as part of my effort to keep the Congress fully informed, I am reporting on the status of efforts to obtain Iraq's compliance with various resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council. The last report, consistent with Public Law 102–1, was transmitted on January 19, 2001.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Compliance With the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty
April 12, 2001

Dear _____ *:*

Attached is the 2000 Report on CFE Compliance. The report is prepared pursuant to Condition 5(C) of the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Document Agreed Among the States Parties to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe of November 19, 1990. The report was prepared by the previous Administration.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader; and Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 13.

Message on the Observance of Easter
April 13, 2001

I am pleased to send warm greetings to all those observing Easter. On this day, Christians around the world join in celebrating the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Son of Man.

For Christians everywhere, Easter is a day when, in the words of the ancient Exultet hymn, the earth "rejoices in shining splendor, radiant in the brightness of its King." It is a time to be humbled by and grateful for God's sacrifice and boundless love and to rejoice in the sheer wonder of life and the promise of victory over death.

Easter comes at the end of the Lenten season, a period of penitence and solemnity in many Christian traditions. The Lenten season prepares Christ's followers for the joyous affirmation that "Christ is Risen!" Holy Week activities, including Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, and Good Friday, remind the faithful of the events leading up to Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection.

Many traditions associated with Easter have become a part of our American way of life. Although these customs may differ, the universal message of Easter draws all Christian communities together. As families and friends gather to celebrate, we renew our commitment to follow the example of Jesus Christ in loving our neighbors and giving of ourselves for others. On this joyous day, let us also remember all those in need and those Christians around the world who are persecuted for their faith.

Laura joins me in sending best wishes for a wonderful Easter.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The President's Radio Address
April 14, 2001

Good morning. This weekend I am at home in Crawford, Texas, with my wife and my family. Millions of other families are also spending time together this weekend, and Laura and I wish you all a happy Easter.

Our thoughts are also with the men and women of our military, deployed around the world and away from their families. They have our sincere gratitude. And on this holiday, we offer the thanks of our Nation to the 24 service men and women who are no longer in China and are now home.

This weekend also marks the close of Passover, when Jews recall their deliverance from oppression. We hope this Passover has been a time of reflection and renewal.

Renewal is the hope of every person and the promise of many religions. This season signifies the hope of renewal, a reawakening, a fresh vision of our lives and our possibilities. And in this season, we are reminded that on the path of renewal, we are not alone. We have one another, family members and friends, who know us and accept us as we are. And if we're very fortunate, we have people in our lives who see us not just as we are but also as we can be. That is the love of family.

And many of us trust a Creator who knows us and loves us and has a plan for our lives. We cannot know where that plan will lead us on Earth, but we are assured that it leads nearer to God. This is the comfort of faith.

In this season of renewal, we remember that failures in life are never final, that hope leads us closer to the truth, that in the end, even death itself will be defeated. And that is the shared belief of many faiths, and that is the promise of Easter morning.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9 a.m. on April 12 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 14. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 13 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks to the United States Chamber of Commerce
April 16, 2001

Thank you very much. Kelly, thank you very much for that kind introduction. It's an honor for me to be here. Tom, thank you for opening up this fantastic facility. I am thrilled to know that some of my former Governors are with members of the chambers in their respective States, and I want to say hello to them. I thank all those who are tuning in. It's kind of nice to be able to speak to so many folks in so many cities without having to fire up Air Force One. [*Laughter*]

I'm especially honored to be able to speak to the folks who really help our economy grow, the entrepreneurs, the business folks of America, the employers, the risk takers, the people who really work hard to realize the great American Dream.

As Kelly said, this is tax day. All across America, husbands and wives spent last weekend side-by-side at the kitchen table trying to finish their 1040s. You have to say this for the income tax, it tends to bring families together. [*Laughter*]

The Internal Revenue Service asks our families in America a lot of questions: How much did you earn? Did you move last year? How big is your mortgage payment? You know, the truth of the matter is, the IRS knows more about us than our neighbors do. In a lot of cases, they know more about us than our families do. But while the tax system knows a lot about our citizens, there's a lot our citizens may not know about our tax system.

In 2001 the Federal Government will take a bigger share of the U.S. economy in taxes than in any year since 1944. And I'll remind you, in 1944 we had 11.5 million people under arms. The Federal Government will take more as a percentage of the national economy this year than it did during World War II except for one year, more than in any year of the Vietnam war or the Korean conflict, more than it took to win World War I or prevail in the cold war. Our country is at peace, but our Government is charging wartime prices. Enough is enough. The American people deserve tax relief.

You often hear it said, we cannot afford tax relief. But even after adjusting for inflation, the U.S. Government will collect twice as much income tax revenue in 2001 as it did in 1981. Enough is enough, folks. It's time to give our folks some tax relief in America.

During the budget debates in Washington, some Members of Congress complained that they did not have enough money to spend, but in 2001 the income tax will yield 2 billion in revenues for each and every one of the 535 Members of Congress. I think they should be able to get by on that—[*laughter*]—even the Senators. [*Laughter*] No, enough's enough. People in America deserve tax relief.

Thanks to the help of a lot of folks here and all around the country, tax relief is on the way. The American taxpayer won some important victories a couple of weeks ago. The House of Representatives voted in favor of a plan that I think is an important plan, 1.6 trillion in tax relief over the next 10 years. The Senate approved most of my tax plan but wants the Government to spend far more.

Some Members of the Senate are, unfortunately, proving the point I make all across the country: If you send it, they will spend it. [*Laughter*] Federal discretionary spending rose by 8 percent in 2001. The Senate has just voted to increase the discretionary spending by another 8 percent in 2002. At that rate, Federal discretionary spending will double by 2010. Think about that. If we keep spending at the pace the Senate wants, in only 9 years' time Government operations will cost twice as much as they do today.

Now, Senators are in their home States this week listening to the taxpayers. I hope Americans will send a clear message: Excessive Federal spending threatens economic vitality. What we want is a stronger economy, not larger Federal Government.

There's a better way: Increase discretionary spending by a moderate and responsible 4 percent—by the way, at a rate larger than inflation—and then reduce taxes for everyone who pays taxes.

My plan does not puncture the Tax Code with loopholes. It doesn't give special treatment to special interests. My plan targets only one interest, the public interest. It directs help to individuals and families and small businesses. It is a plan for real people, and it will help produce real prosperity.

Let me tell you a little bit about what tax relief means for American families. My plan, when fully implemented, returns about $1,600 to the typical family of four. Sixteen hundred pays the typical mortgage for more than a month. Sixteen hundred will buy the typical family nearly 3 months worth of groceries. Sixteen hundred will fuel two cars for a year.

There are a lot of American mothers and dads who wake up in America today anxious over bills they have to pay. Their worries don't get any easier when the Federal Government takes more of their income

in taxes than they pay for food, shelter, and clothing. For families with children to raise and debts to pay, tax relief will lift burdens and ease worries.

For small businesses, tax relief means more customers and improved cashflow, more money to hire more workers, more money to expand benefits, more money to invest in new technology. Tax relief will create new jobs. Tax relief will generate new wealth, and tax relief will open new opportunities.

If you read some of the news accounts of this budget debate, if you listen to what some of the Members of Congress say, you'd think that little of value can ever happen in America unless the Government makes it happen. You'd think that when we return money to the taxpayers, it evaporates into the air.

Let me tell you some of the things 1.6 trillion could mean to the private economy. It could buy 10 million new middle-income homes. It could pay the tuitions of 26 million young people at a private college or university for 4 years each. It could purchase 76 million new automobiles. These are the kinds of things Americans do with their own money. And there are many others.

Just ask Tommy and Sharen Winfield, for example. They're watching via closed circuit here from Atlanta, Georgia. The Winfields have three children. Tommy has been working as an operating engineer at Children's Hospital of Atlanta for the past 3 years. They pay 1,380 a year in Federal income taxes. Under my plan, they'd pay nothing.

I first met Tommy a few weeks ago, and we were having a roundtable discussion about tax relief. I asked him whether he thought the relief would make a difference to his family—you see, there are some who say, "Thirteen eighty, that's nothing. That's not enough money for anybody." But let me tell you what Tommy said loud and clear, and I hope the Members of the United States Congress hear it. Tommy said, "Sir, if they don't believe you"—meaning whether or not tax relief means anything—"then they should just ask me." Thirteen eighty means a lot to Tommy. It means a lot to a lot of folks in America: those who are struggling with higher energy bills because we hadn't had an energy policy; those who have got big credit card debts.

We've got the Blake family with us from Alexandria, Virginia, Kelly and Pam—one less son. [*Laughter*] They pay $4,000 in Federal income tax. Under my plan, they will save $1,700. That's real money for this hard-working couple. They and their two sons, I can assure you, will find good use for that tax relief. And whatever they do, I strongly believe they will spend it better and more productively than the Federal Government can.

This is an important debate for our country. It's a debate about how to make sure our economy continues to grow. But it's really a debate about, who do we trust? Who do—those of us who have been honored to serve our country at the Federal level—who do we trust with the people's money? Do we trust our Government, or do we trust the people? I believe, after we meet priorities—and we meet priorities by growing the discretionary budget by 4 percent—that we always have got to remember whose money it is we're talking about. It's not the Government's money; it's the people's money.

And we've always got to remember, the role of Government is not to create wealth. It's to create an environment in which the entrepreneur can flourish, in which the small business can grow to become a big business. That's the role of Government. And that's why it's vital at this point in American history that we return money back to the people. Instead of returning money, we ought not to take it in the first place, with real meaningful tax relief.

I've learned that the people can make a big difference in a lot of debates, particularly the tax relief debate. We're making

some pretty good progress. I saw a good Democrat Senator out of Georgia the other day. Max Cleland said that he is interested in—when he comes back—interested in supporting the $1.6 trillion plan. I think that's what he said. It certainly sounded like it to me. [*Laughter*] And that's a good sign. I appreciate the Senator going home and listening to the people.

You see, I think we've finally made the case that we can meet the obligations of the Federal Government, that we don't have to grow at 8 percent in order to meet obligations. We've also made the case that sending money back to the people is important for our economy and important for the American Dream. And I want to thank your help for it.

I want to invite all Americans to take a look at the budget plan themselves. You can order the little book by calling 202–512–1800, and ask for the Citizen's Guide to the Federal Budget. Or you can download it for free at www.whitehouse.government.

It's important for you to follow your Government closely. It's important for you to not let the filter decide what's reality and what's not reality. It's important to get the facts. And it's always important to understand that tax relief will stimulate creativity and enterprise for individual Americans.

I firmly believe tax relief means a better life in a more prosperous America. So let the Members of Congress know when they come back that you're watching, that you care for what they do because it will affect your life in a positive way.

I can't thank you all enough for your support, and I can't thank you enough for letting me come by and make my case.

God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:25 p.m. in the Hall of Flags at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. In his remarks, he referred to Kelly N. Stanley, chairman, and Thomas J. Donohue, president and chief executive officer, U.S. Chamber of Commerce; Tommy and Sharen Winfield's children, Joy and Tiffany Winfield and Ager Hilson; and Kelly and Pam Blake's children, Jeremy and Jared.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Ricardo Lagos of Chile and an Exchange With Reporters

April 16, 2001

President Bush. I'm very honored to welcome the President of Chile here to the Oval Office. Chile is a remarkable country. It's a country that is a strong democracy, that has shown people in this hemisphere the importance of rule of law. I look forward to renewing a friendship with the President.

I also look forward to talking about free trade. I'm confident that by the time this year is over we will conclude a free trade agreement with Chile. It's in our Nation's best interest to do so.

And finally, I think some Members of Congress could take a good—could take some lessons from Chile, particularly when it comes to how to run our pension plans. Our Social Security system needs to be modernized, Mr. President, and I look forward to getting some suggestions as to how to do so, since you have done so, so well.

But anyway, I welcome you to our country. And thank you very much for being here.

President Lagos. I would like to take this opportunity, and I would like to say that I agree with the President that our team

has to work hard, very hard, in order to be able to conclude an agreement by the end of the year. And this is so, I'm sure, that the shared investment in our countries are going to increase for the benefit of our population in order to give equal opportunities to everybody.

We have common shares and common goals, not only common interests but common shares and values with the U.S., in democracy, respect to human rights, a market economy. And we are trying to do the best to have equal opportunities for everybody. And I think that these are the major goals for your administration, our administration. And we have to work in that direction. I'm sure that the trade agreement, if we are able to conclude, is going to be important to go in this direction.

Thank you.

President Bush. Thank you, Mr. President.

Q. Mr. President, thank you, sir.

President Bush. The ground rules are, a question from the American side and then a question from the Chilean side.

Trade Promotion Authority

Q. Sir, last August, when you were a candidate, you said in Miami that when the next President sits at the American Summit, other nations must know that fast-track trade authority is on the way. Why are you going to Quebec with no promise of fast-track authority, and are you willing to compromise with Democrats to get it?

President Bush. Well, I'd certainly like to have what they call fast-track authority. It would—most Presidents have had it. It's important for the President to fight for the right to be able to negotiate trade agreements without amendment. I believe we're making progress toward regaining that power for the President.

In the meantime, we can negotiate a bilateral treaty with Chile. It's a separate issue. I'm confident we can get it done, Mr. President. Ambassador Zoellick is here. Ambassador Zoellick and the rest of my administration are committed to not only having a good trade agreement with Chile, but also giving the President the trade promotion authority. And we'll discuss ways to get it out of the Congress when the Congress gets back.

I had a meeting with the leadership on both sides of the aisle to talk about trade promotion authority. I believe we can get—I believe we can get it done. It's going to require a lot of hard work and effort to do so.

Q. Are you willing to compromise to do it, sir?

President Bush. See, what happens here in American politics, Mr. President, is people are always trying to get me to put my cards on the table. [*Laughter*]

President Lagos. That's the same down there, you know. [*Laughter*]

President Bush. That happens in Chile, too? [*Laughter*]

Arms Sales to Chile

Q. Mr. President, Chile is looking to buy F–16 planes to the United States, to modernize their army. What do you think of the sales of sophisticated arms to Latin America? Are you willing to support the requests of Chile?

President Bush. I'm willing to discuss this matter with the President. I look forward to this being on the agenda that we're about to have. And we will listen to any request that our friends in our hemisphere make. I will tell you this, I am confident that Chile is a peaceful nation. I'm confident that they're a democracy that's—that intends to make the world more peaceful. And that's a good place to begin our discussion.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:55 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to the Organization of American States
April 17, 2001

Mr. Ambassador, thank you very much. Secretary General, distinguished Ambassadors, it's a pleasure for me to be here at the OAS. Thank you for having me.

I want to recognize, before I begin, Luigi Einaudi. He has ably served our Government for decades. He's now lent his skills and experience to the OAS. It is clear that he and the Secretary General have made a very good team. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador.

As I prepare to go to the Summit of the Americas in Quebec, I thought it was important to make a visit to the house of the Americas. It was a good meeting. I just had a good meeting with the Secretary General. We had a good discussion about the future of the OAS and its important role. We discussed opportunities and challenges that our hemisphere faces.

Today I want to speak with you about our shared future and the important role the OAS will play in helping to shape it. Our gathering in Quebec comes at a remarkable moment in history. All the nations of this hemisphere, save one, have embraced a collective commitment to democracy and to the fundamental freedoms that underlie democracy. We have embraced a collective challenge to build a hemisphere that trades in freedom and grows in prosperity. We have embraced a collective responsibility to break down the barriers of poverty, disease, ignorance, so individuals may better realize their full, God-given potential. The OAS has an important role to play in these common goals.

In lands where liberty is threatened by corruption, drugs, and human rights abuses, the OAS is helping combat these destructive forces. Along borders where tensions run high, the OAS helps build confidence and avoid crises. And in lands where freedom's hold is fragile, the OAS is there to strengthen it.

The OAS's recent work in Peru is an example of this organization's commitment to democracy. The election, held there on April the 8th, was peaceful and well-run. And we know this: It is a direct result of the Secretary General's involvement. And our hemisphere is grateful, Mr. Secretary.

We need to build on successes like these. The United States hopes, for example, that the OAS can serve as a valuable mediator in Haiti between President Aristide and the democratic opposition.

We also need to build on the progress the OAS has made in the fight against drug trafficking and abuse. Thanks to the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission, our hemisphere is more united in addressing this problem—both in supply and, I might remind you, in demand—than it has ever been before. And the Commission's new evaluation system for monitoring nations' progress in fighting drugs is a major achievement.

In this week's Quebec Summit, our goal is simple, yet profound. The discussions we hold and the mandates we produce must help improve the lives of people throughout our hemisphere. A summit is given meaning and value by concrete results.

We must strengthen democratic institutions in this hemisphere to give reality to the forms of democracy. This means improving judicial institutions and making government more open. Good government is essential to building the trust of our citizens. And democratic values must remain the core of our hemispheric *familia.* As Prime Minister Chretien so aptly said in this very hall last February, "We must ensure that smaller economies are provided the assistance they need to implement trade agreements and to realize the full benefits of a more integrated hemisphere."

We must extend the benefits of education in this hemisphere. Both development and democracy in the long term depend on education. We must build the skills and reward the hopes of all our people.

And we must affirm our commitment to complete negotiations on the Free Trade Area of the Americas by January 2005. Nothing we do in Quebec will be more important or have a greater long-term impact. It will make our hemisphere the largest free trade area in the world, encompassing 34 countries and 800 million people.

There's a vital link between freedom of people and freedom of commerce. Democratic freedoms cannot flourish unless our hemisphere also builds a prosperity whose benefits are widely shared. And open trade is the essential foundation for that prosperity and that possibility.

Open trade fuels the engines of economic growth that creates new jobs and new income. It applies the power of markets to the needs of the poor. It spurs the process of economic and legal reform. It helps dismantle protectionist bureaucracies that stifle incentive and invite corruption. And open trade reinforces the habits of liberty that sustain democracy over the long term.

For all these reasons, my administration is committed to pursuing open trade at every opportunity. We'll pursue open trade bilaterally with individual nations such as Chile and Singapore and Jordan. We'll pursue open trade globally through a new round of multilateral negotiations. We want to open global markets so that our farmers and ranchers and workers and service providers and high-tech entrepreneurs can enjoy the benefits of a more integrated world. And of course, we'll pursue these goals throughout our hemisphere through the Free Trade Area of the Americas.

Since open trade is one of my top priorities for our hemisphere, gaining U.S. trade promotion authority is one of my top priorities in Congress. I made this clear in my first address to the Congress. We have reinforced this message in meetings my Cabinet officers and I have had with over 100 Members of Congress. Trade promotion authority gives our trading partners confidence that they can rely on the deals that they negotiate. It allows us to seize opportunities to expand the circle of trade and prosperity.

We're now actively working with Congress on a strategy for passing legislation granting the trade promotion authority. We'll intensify this effort when I return from Quebec, and I'm confident we'll succeed.

Shortly after the summit, we'll also publish the initial working draft of our hemispheric free trade agreement. This will allow our citizens from all our countries to see what is being negotiated and give them a chance to provide their views on this important document.

Just a few moments ago, the Secretary General and I walked from his office, and we passed the Hall of Heroes. The great leaders honored there embody the spirit of cooperation that characterizes the OAS. These visionaries imagined a future in which the Americas would be bound together in a common effort to create a hemisphere that is both free and prosperous.

Today, we have the opportunity to realize that dream. Together, it is our responsibility to seize the moment.

Thank you for having me.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:45 p.m. in the Hall of the Americas at the Organization of American States headquarters building. In his remarks, he referred to Colombian Ambassador to the OAS Humberto de la Calle, who introduced the President; Secretary General César Gaviria and Assistant Secretary General Luigi R. Einaudi, OAS; President Jean-Bertrand Aristide of Haiti; and Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada. The President spoke a portion of his opening

remarks in Spanish, and the translation was provided in the transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary.

Statement on Environmental Protection Agency Action To Combat Lead Poisoning
April 17, 2001

I support Administrator Whitman's decision to implement a rule to significantly expand and disclose the information available to the public about the presence of lead and lead emissions in their communities.

Lead is a persistent and highly toxic substance that can cause a range of environmental and health problems. It has an especially harmful impact on the health of children and infants. And it is found too often in some of America's older, poorer communities. Under this new rule, workers, consumers, and communities will be provided crucial information about the presence of this toxic substance.

To assist in complying with this rule, I have asked Administrator Whitman to provide technical assistance to affected small businesses to help them prepare their first reports.

This is an important and responsible approach that will protect American families and our environment from unnecessary exposure to lead. My administration will continue to support and promote efforts based on sound science to clean our air, water, and land.

Remarks at Central Connecticut State University in New Britain, Connecticut
April 18, 2001

Thank you all. Thank you very much for that warm welcome. Governor, it's good to see you again. On the way in, he heard I was going to get an honorary degree in law, and he said, "Does that make you a lawyer?" [*Laughter*] I said, "Nope." But it's such an honor to receive such a degree. I want to thank the chairman, I want to thank Dick Judd, and I want to thank all the folks here at Central for working so hard to make our visit a great visit.

I love your Governor. It seems like the people of Connecticut do, too. And like me, he married well. [*Laughter*] It's an honor to be here with the first lady of the State of Connecticut.

Sorry Laura is not with me today. She's doing a great job as the First Lady. I'm really proud of her. I'm proud of the fact that she's got her priorities straight: her faith and her family, her country, and teachers. She's spending a lot of time not only promoting literacy, but she's going to spend a lot of time encouraging people to become teachers, to saying to folks that are young and old alike, "If you can, get in the classroom. It makes a huge difference."

And so, for the teachers who are here, we thank you from the bottom of our heart for being teachers. And for the young who are trying to figure out what they're going

to do when they get older, think about teaching. It is a noble profession, and it's an important profession.

And to the moms and dads, always remember that good teaching starts at home; that a mother and a dad must be a teacher to their children. And it starts by remembering the most important job you'll have, if you're fortunate enough to be a mom or a dad, is to be a loving mom and a loving dad, to love our children with all our heart and all our soul and all our mind. That's what it's all about.

In order for America to fulfill its promise, all of us must, if we're fortunate enough to be a parent, assume that responsibility and understand how important it is to start teaching our children at home, not only how to read and write and add and subtract but to teach them the meaning of love and hope and compassion. And we can do a better job of that in our homes in America, and we will do so. And when we do so, our classrooms will be easier places for our teachers to teach.

I'm honored to be traveling with members of the congressional delegation here from the State of Connecticut. First, Jim Maloney is here. Jim and I don't share the same party, but we share the same love for America. He serves his country because he loves America; I serve mine because I love America. We have got—figured out we can disagree in an agreeable way. It would be a lot easier if we disagreed less often. [*Laughter*] But nevertheless, I'm honored he's traveling with us today. Thank you, Jim.

Rob Simmons is a Congressman from Connecticut, as well. He's newly elected. They tell me he's strong in his home district, and I know why, because he's doing a fabulous job in Washington. Rob, thank you very much. The old wily veteran, Chris Shays, is with us today. He's solid. I've gotten to know Chris, and I respect him and like him a lot. He's a good, solid citizen.

And of course, the hometown girl is here with us. Nancy Johnson brings a lot of class to Washington, DC. She's so powerful—she said, "Mr. President, you make sure you come to my hometown if you're coming to Connecticut." I said, "Yes, ma'am." [*Laughter*]

I want to thank the three Republican Members for supporting the budget I sent to the Congress. I want to tell you something about the budget. It's a budget that sets priorities, priorities to make sure our folks who wear the uniform of the military get paid well. It's a priority that understands we can do better with health care in America. So, we double the Medicare budget; we increase the number of folks who will be served in community health centers; we have money for tax credits for the working uninsured. It's a budget that fulfills promises by making sure that we don't dip into the Social Security Trust in order to meet discretionary spending needs. It's a good budget.

It's a budget, though, that has created some problems in Washington, because it grows discretionary spending by 4 percent. And that creates some tension, because there's a lot of folks up there that would rather spend a lot more money than that. But let me remind you that 4 percent growth in discretionary spending is greater than the rate of inflation. It's more money on an increase than a lot of people's paychecks have gone up by. It's a pretty good chunk of money. It's real dollars.

The tradeoff is, either you have priorities and keep discretionary spending at 4 percent and give people some of their money back, or you increase the size and scope of the Federal Government. And I've made it clear, I stand on the side of the people who pay the bills in America. If we grow the discretionary spending by 8 percent, it means that in 9 years, the discretionary budget of America will double, and that will crowd out private enterprise. It will make it hard to continue to grow our economy.

I believe strongly that what we did in the House is the right thing. And I believe strongly that we're making good progress toward real, meaningful tax relief. The House had a $1.6 trillion cut. The Senate is a little over $1.2 trillion. And the summation of the message is: Tax relief is on the way, and it's right for America. It's the right thing for our economy, and it's the right thing to give people their own money back—actually, not take it in the first place—so that you can make the decisions for your families, so you can save and dream and build.

The tax relief plan we submitted to the Congress says this: If you pay taxes, you ought to get relief. It says we ought not try to pick and choose winners. The role of Washington isn't to say, "You get tax relief, and you don't get tax relief." That's not the role of Washington. The role of Washington is to say, "We're going to be fair. Everybody who pays taxes ought to get relief."

We cut the rates at the bottom end, and we cut the rates at the top end. Now, I know I've heard a lot of people talking about, "Well, you can't give tax relief to the people at the top end." I say, why not? If you pay taxes, you ought to get relief. But I also want to remind people of this fact, that there are thousands of small businesses in America who are unincorporated, people who pay—who are sole proprietorships who pay taxes at the personal income level. There's a lot of small businesses who are creating new jobs who pay high taxes. And when you cut the top rate in America, what we're doing is sending this signal: The role of Government is not to create wealth; the role of Government is to create an environment in which the entrepreneur can flourish. And tax relief means more money in the pockets of small-business owners in America. Ours is a tax plan that makes the code more fair.

The marriage penalty is unfair, and we need to do something about it right now. And do you know what else is unfair? The death tax is unfair. It's unfair to farmers and ranchers and small-business owners, and it's time to get rid of it.

Now, there's a myth in Washington that says you can't have meaningful, real tax relief. But those are the folks that want to increase the size and scope of the Federal Government. And it really is a matter of who you trust. And I'd rather have the American people spending the money than the Federal Government. Once we meet priorities, I trust the people with their own money. I trust the people of central Connecticut to make the right decisions for their families. I want more people to have more money in their pockets so they can save for their children's education or so they can build for their future.

And that's what this debate is all about, as far as I'm concerned. And I'm not yielding. I remember who—because I understand this: The surplus is not the Government's money; the surplus is the people's money.

I mentioned a while ago that one of my priorities in the budget is education. The Department that gets the biggest increase of any Department in our budget is the Department of Education. It's important to spend money on education. I recognize that, and we do. And I'll talk about some of the spending initiatives that we set out. But I also want to remind you, money alone isn't going to solve our problems. And we have some problems.

Just 2 weeks ago, we received scores from the National Assessment of Education Progress; it's called the NAEP. It showed that American fourth-grade students are reading no better on average than fourth graders did 8 years ago. That's not right. The test also showed that in some neighborhoods the scores are going up, and in some neighborhoods the scores are going down, that there's a gap. And if there's a gap in literacy, you can imagine what that's going to mean in later years. And folks, we've got to do something about it

in America. It's time to stop talking, and it's time to start doing something about it.

The Third International Mathematics and Science survey was released recently. It was a survey of eighth-grade students in 37 foreign countries and 13 American States. And there, the news isn't very good, either. Students in high-scoring Michigan finished well behind students in Taiwan, Korea, and Japan. American students overall scored lower than students in Bulgaria. It's time to stop talking about things, and it's time to start doing some things to make sure our students can read and write and add and subtract. And I mean early, before it's too late.

And that's the crux of the reforms I sent to the Congress, and I'd like to discuss those with you real quick. First, here are the principles involved. It means our Nation must set high standards and high expectations, just like Governor Rowland has done in the State of Connecticut. We've got to expect the best for every child. We cannot assume that only certain children can learn. We must have the attitude that every child in America, regardless of where they're raised or how they're born, can learn. Low standards will yield low results. We've got to raise the bar and expect the best in every classroom in America.

Secondly, we must trust local people to chart the path for excellence for the children of America. We must trust the Governors and local school board members and principals in schools. We must empower people at the local level, because one size does not fit all when it comes to the education of the children in America.

And thirdly, we've got to measure. We've got to hold people accountable. We've got to insist that, for example, if you receive Federal money, you measure. I don't believe the Federal Government ought to design a national test; that would undermine the local control of schools. But I do believe that in return for taxpayers' money, that the local folks ought to develop accountability measures that tells us all whether or not children are learning to read and write and add and subtract. It is so important to have an accountability system become the cornerstone of reform in America.

And we're making progress on this issue, like we're making progress on the budget. The Members will be coming back from their Easter breaks and will be taking up the education reforms. I appreciate, for example, the work of Senator Joe Lieberman. Oh, I know that may surprise some in Connecticut or elsewhere in America to hear me say something nice about a man that tried to prevent me from becoming the President. [*Laughter*] But nevertheless, like me, he's put aside the election, and he's focusing on what's right for America, and he's helping bring forth an education plan that embodies the principles that I just described. And I appreciate his hard work and his support on this measure. And we've agreed on some core principles.

We haven't agreed 100 percent all across the board, but we're making good progress. For example, we've agreed on a major consolidation of Federal education programs that will give States more flexibility and more freedom. In other words, to put it this way, instead of having Federal money with all kinds of strings attached to it, we're having Federal spending, Federal money, but trusting the local folks to spend that money that meets the needs of each respective State.

We're making great progress on what I've called a Reading First initiative. The budget I submitted triples the amount of money to help fight illiteracy in schools. It says that if a State wants to, you can access the Federal money, but you develop a K-through-two diagnostic tool to make sure kindergarten teachers through second grade teachers have got the ability to discern which children need extra help. It means you've got to develop a curriculum that works. By the way, phonics needs to be a part of our curriculum in America.

And as importantly, it provides money for intensive instruction. So when you find a child who may be lagging behind, instead of just shuffling him or her through the system, we say, "What can we do to help you? What can we do to make sure you're up to speed early, before it's too late?" So it's an intensive program that says that each child is important and each child must be assessed. And when we find failure, let's get it addressed early, before it's too late, because we don't want one single child left behind in America.

And we're making good progress on strong accountability systems, which I just described, that says, if you receive Federal money, you measure—three through eight—so we know. Some States posts scores on the Internet. I know there's a lot of discussion about parental involvement. There's nothing like getting a mom involved by posting lousy scores on the Internet. There's nothing like saying to somebody, "The school may not be quite what you think it is, and therefore, we're going to let you know what the results are by comparing it from one school to the next." No, results are important.

By the way, what's important about results is it begins to change the whole attitude in the schools. Schools used to say—and still do in some places—they ask the question, "Gosh, how old are you? Well, if you're 8, you're supposed to be here, and if you're 12, we'll put you here, and if you're 16, you belong here." And by having accountability as the cornerstone of reform, we begin to ask the question, "What do you know? What do you know?" It's a fundamental change of questions, isn't it? What do you know, instead of how old you are.

And if you don't know what you're supposed to know, ours is a society that will work hard to make sure you do. For an accountability system to matter, there must be consequences. We just can't accept failure when we find it; something must happen. And we're making great progress to provide parents more options when we discover failure—when we find the schools won't change their teaching methodologies, for example, when they can't meet standards—options such as charter schools or public school choice or private tutoring programs. And we're finding consensus to make sure that the accountability system has got some teeth to it, that there is a consequence for failure and, oh, by the way, a consequence for success, as well.

Johnny and I have just come from B.W. Tinker School. [*Applause*] It's good to have the B.W. Tinker PTA here—[*laughter*]—which, by the way, is an active PTA, I'm told. But the students were seriously underperforming 8 years ago on the mastery test. Step one is, the State at least was measuring, so we knew. You see, you can't make that statement, "The students were vastly underperforming on the mastery test," unless there was such a thing as the mastery test.

Now because of two great principals, both of whom I met—and by the way, it's also—it should be clear to everybody, I hope, in America that a good principal, a great principal will make a huge difference in the education of the children. Paul and Lauren, they use the tests to refocus the curriculum and the teaching methodology of that school. In other words, they use the test for what it's designed to be for, and that is, as a way to correct problems. Tests should not be viewed as a way to punish people; tests need to be viewed as a way to correct problems. And they did so. And they intensified the students' reading programs and writing programs.

We went to a very unusual writing program. It floored Congressman Johnson and me when we saw the task at hand. It was a very sophisticated writing program for a bunch of little ones. But they intensified the effort differently, and they said, "We can do better." They set the bar higher. And now, nearly two-thirds of the Tinker students showed mastery in math. That's up 40 percent since 1993. And more than

three-quarters showed mastery in writing. That's up 36 percent.

In other words, the entrepreneurs, the educational entrepreneurs took hold of the situation. They used the information systems to say, "Something's not right. Now, let's do something about it." And they have. And B.W. Tinker students are better off for it, and I'm glad I went to see that school.

Oh, I know it's hard for some to accept accountability as the cornerstone for reform. You'll hear all kinds of excuses. I heard them as the Governor of Texas; I'm sure Johnny's heard them. You'll hear people say, "Well, that's too much Government. We can't have that kind of Government." My attitude is, the Government ought to be results oriented, not process oriented. The Government ought to ask the people, "What are the results?" And if the results aren't good enough, we better expect a better return for taxpayers' money.

And you'll hear people say, "Well, you can't test, because it's racist to test." Folks, let me tell you this as plainly as I can: It's racist not to test. It is racist not to measure. Because guess who gets shuffled through the system? Children whose parents don't speak English as a first language—it's so much easier to quit on some newly arrived to our country. "It's too hard to educate this person; we'll just move him through. We'll ask them how old they are and put them here, regardless of whether they can read and write." Inner-city kids—it's so much easier to walk into a classroom of inner-city kids and say, "These kids are too hard to educate. We'll move them through." Those days have got to end in America. What we need to do is to make sure not one child gets left behind.

And I aim to do something about math, as well. I've been spending a lot of time talking about reading, but in my budget I want to point up a couple of programs that I think make sense: $200 million for States to develop math and science partnership programs with local education districts, as well as higher education institutions—an opportunity to be able to combine the two.

We've got money in our budget for loan forgiveness for math and science graduates who teach in high-needed schools for up to 5 years. And that's to defer loans—from $5,000 to $17,500 of loan forgiveness.

And as importantly, we increase teacher training funds, up to $2.6 billion in the year 2002—up 15 percent from 2001—and provide States the flexibility needed to make sure that the teacher training matches the needs in the classrooms across the State of Connecticut, for example.

Now, this budget is good. Now, they'll be arguing about spending more money or not spending more money. But the budget we submitted, coupled with the reforms that we're asking for, will make a huge difference in making sure that we meet a goal that's not a Republican goal, and it's not a Democratic goal; it's an American goal of making sure every child in America gets educated.

And one other aspect of the education program I want to share with you is, also, we triple the amount of money for character education in our classrooms. Education is not complete unless we're willing to teach our children not only how to read and write but the difference between right and wrong. We ought not to fear to teach our children good, old-fashioned values that have stood the test of time: Don't lie, cheat, or steal; respect others; respect their opinions.

We also have got a program that says, in the after-school programs—we spend all kinds of money for after-school programs—but I think it's so important for us to open up those after-school programs to faith-based and community-based programs that will be able to say—that sends a clear message, that if you exist because of the universal call to love a neighbor just like you would like to be loved yourself, you're welcome onto the public school grounds in an after-school program to teach children

right from wrong, to teach them that somebody in our society cares for them.

Which really leads me to a bigger point and a bigger mission for all of us, and that is, how to usher in a period of responsibility in America. I think I can help with that, and I think all of us in Washington can help with that by, first of all, working together to change the tone in our Nation's Capital. It means that we've got to have a spirit of respect in Washington. We've got to end this kind of needless name-calling and finger-pointing, the kind of zero-sum politics that says, "If so-and-so thinks it's a good idea, I think it's a lousy idea, because we happen to be from different political parties."

I think we need to respect each other more in Washington, which will in turn set a good signal for people on the playgrounds of America, for example, to respect somebody with whom they may not agree. We need a culture of results in Washington, DC—less noise, less preening in front of cameras, and more focus on getting things done on behalf of the American people. And we need a spirit of responsibility. And it starts with leadership, as well, that each of us understand the awesome responsibilities of the jobs we hold.

I think we're making progress in the Nation's Capital. I truly do. Oh, I know there's occasionally somebody says something, particularly about a nice fellow like me, that I don't like—[*laughter*]—but I tend to ignore it and focus on the people's business. And the people's business is what's important.

And that's why I love to travel outside of Washington. I love to drive the roads of our country, just like I did today, and see the hundreds of people who came to wave at the Presidential limousine. It's important for a President to see that and for Members of Congress to be aware of that, as well, because it reminds us about the strength of America. And the strength of this country lies not inside the halls of our government in Washington, DC, or in Hartford, Connecticut. The true strength of America lies in the hearts and souls of the American citizens.

And that's why I'm so optimistic about this country's future, because if that's the case, if the true strength of America is in the hearts and souls of our citizens, we've got a bright future ahead of us, because we've got great citizens in this country.

This is a fabulous country. In Washington, we've got to always understand that. That's why tax relief is important, because it empowers people to make decisions in their lives. That's why the Faith-Based Initiative I've talked about is important, because it says that in order to change lives, we need to change hearts, and there are thousands of people who are willing to love a neighbor just like they'd like to be loved themselves.

No, the great strength is when we understand America's society changes one heart, one soul, one conscience at a time. And that's oftentimes because some loving American, not because of Government but because of care and compassion, says to a neighbor in need, "What can I do to help?" I hope to see mentoring programs flourish all across America. I want any child who wonders whether somebody loves them to have a loving adult say, "I love you. I love you with all the bottom of my heart."

No, this country is based upon great values and great principles. But its true greatness is the fact that we're a land full of decent, loving, and compassionate and hard-working people. And I can't tell you what a huge honor it is to be a President of such a land.

God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:40 p.m. in the Welte Auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. John G. Rowland of Connecticut and his wife, Patricia; Lawrence D. McHugh, chairman, board of trustees, Connecticut State University System; Richard L. Judd, president, Central Connecticut State

University; and Paul V. Ciochetti, former principal, and Lauren F. Elias, principal, B.W. Tinker Elementary School.

Remarks at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
April 18, 2001

Thank you very much. [*Applause*] This is a hallowed place. Please behave yourself.

It's an honor for us to be here. Laura and I have just come from a fantastic tour. I want to thank Rabbi Greenberg for his hospitality and Ruth Mandel for her hospitality and the Director, Sara Bloomfield, for giving us such a special evening. Thank you all very much for your graciousness, and I want to thank you all very much for coming. And it's an honor for me to be here with members of my White House staff, friends of mine from all around the country.

This isn't like any other museum. It bears witness to the best and to the worst of the human heart. The images here stay with you, and only by confronting them can we begin to grasp the full enormity of the Holocaust. I urge Americans planning a visit to Washington to come here themselves and see what we have just seen.

History records many atrocities before and after the 1930s and 1940s. But it was the Holocaust that forced us to find a new term for horrors on such a scale—a crime against humanity. Human evil has never been so ambitious in scope, so systematic in execution, and so deliberate in its destruction.

In places like this, the evidence has been kept. Without it, we might forget the past, and we might neglect the future. And we must never forget. We must always remember both the cruelty of the guilty and the courage and innocence of their victims.

So many stories from the concentration camps will never be told because many of the witnesses did not survive. The stories we have must be preserved forever: Stories of mothers sacrificing themselves to save their children; stories of children trying to shield their parents; stories of men and women praying and comforting one another in the last moments on this Earth. These tell the greater truth of the Holocaust: The evil is real, but hope endures. Above all, this museum is a testament to hope.

Tomorrow I will have the honor of joining in the Days of Remembrance observances at the Capitol. I will convey America's commitment to the memory of 6 million who died in the Holocaust, our commitment to averting future tragedies, and our commitment to a friend, as a friend, to the Jewish people—to their cause and to the nation they built. I hope to see many of you at the Capitol tomorrow.

Thank you all for coming, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:50 p.m. in the Hall of Witness. In his remarks, he referred to Rabbi Irving Greenberg, chair, and Ruth B. Mandel, vice chair, U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council; and Sara J. Bloomfield, Director, U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Remarks Announcing Support for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants
April 19, 2001

Thank you all for coming. Secretary Powell and Administrator Whitman and I are pleased to make an announcement on the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants. This international agreement would restrict the use of 12 dangerous chemicals—POPs, as they are known, or the "dirty dozen." Negotiations were begun by the previous administration, and this treaty achieves a goal shared by this administration. I'm pleased to announce my support for the treaty and the intention of our Government to sign and submit it for approval by the United States Senate.

This convention is significant in several respects. First, concerns over the hazards of PCBs, DDT, and the other toxic chemicals covered by the agreement are based on solid scientific information. These pollutants are linked to developmental defects, cancer, and other grave problems in humans and animals. The risks are great, and the need for action is clear. We must work to eliminate or at least to severely restrict the release of these toxins without delay.

Second, this agreement addresses a global environmental problem. These chemicals respect no boundaries and can harm Americans even when released abroad.

Third, this treaty takes into account the understandable concerns of less-developed nations. When these chemicals are used, they pose a health and environmental threat, no matter where in the world they're allowed to spread. But some nations with fewer resources have a harder time addressing these threats, and this treaty promises to lend them a hand.

And finally, this treaty shows the possibilities for cooperation among all parties to our environmental debates. Developed nations cooperated with less-developed nations. Businesses cooperated with environmental groups. And now, a Republican administration will continue and complete the work of a Democratic administration.

This is the way environmental policy should work. And I want to thank the United States delegation and all who helped negotiate this important treaty. And after our remarks here, we would like to welcome you in the Oval Office so I can thank you personally.

Mr. Secretary.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:20 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary of State Colin L. Powell and Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Christine Todd Whitman.

Remarks on the Observance of the National Days of Remembrance
April 19, 2001

Members of Congress, members of my Cabinet, Ambassador Ivry, Elie Wiesel, Benjamin Meed and other survivors, Rabbi Greenberg and Dr. Mandel, ladies and gentlemen: Laura and I thank you for asking us to join you on this Day of Remembrance.

Some days are set aside to recall the great and hopeful moments of human experience. Other days, like today, we turn our

minds to painful events. In doing so, we honor the courage and suffering of martyrs and heroes. We also seek the wisdom and courage to prevent future tragedies and future evils.

World War II ended and camps were liberated before many of us were born. The events we recall today have the safe distance of history, and there will come a time when the eyewitnesses are gone. And that is why we are bound by conscience to remember what happened and to whom it happened.

During the war, a Nazi guard told Simon Wiesenthal that in time no one would believe his account of what he saw. Evil on so grand a scale would seem incredible. Yet, we do not just believe; we know. We know because the evidence has been kept; the record has been preserved.

It is fitting to remember the Holocaust under the dome of our Nation's Capitol, with Members of the United States Congress who are here. Some Members had relatives among the victims. Some of you played a part in the liberation of Europe. One Congressman here today fought in the underground, and he, himself, was put into forced labor by the Nazis. We are honored by the presence of the gentleman from California, Tom Lantos.

We remember at the Capitol because the United States has accepted a special role: We strive to be a refuge for the persecuted. We are called by history and by conscience to defend the oppressed. Our country stands on watch for the rise of tyranny, and history's worst tyrants have always reserved a special hatred for the Jewish people.

Tyrants and dictators will accept no other gods before them. They require disobedience to the First Commandment. They seek absolute control and are threatened by faith in God. They fear only the power they cannot possess, the power of truth. So they resent the living example of the devout, especially the devotion of a unique people, chosen by God.

Through centuries of struggle, Jews across the world have been witnesses not only against the crimes of men but for faith in God and God alone. Theirs is a story of defiance in oppression and patience in tribulation, reaching back to the Exodus and their exile. That story continued in the founding of the state of Israel. That story continues in the defense of the state of Israel.

When we remember the Holocaust and to whom it happened, we also must remember where it happened. It didn't happen in some remote or unfamiliar place; it happened right in the middle of the Western world. Trains carrying men, women, and children in cattle cars departed from Paris and Vienna, Frankfurt and Warsaw. And the orders came not from crude and uneducated men but from men who regarded themselves as cultured and well-schooled, modern, and even forward-looking. They had all the outward traits of cultured men, except for conscience.

Their crimes show the world that evil can slip in and blend in amid the most civilized of surroundings. In the end, only conscience can stop it. And moral discernment and decency and tolerance—these can never be assured in any time or in any society. They must always be taught.

Yesterday I had the honor of visiting the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, surrounded by the familiar buildings and symbols of our democratic Government. Outside the museum are expressions of the best of mankind's earthly aspirations; inside are images realized of the worst possibilities of the human mind, the attempted elimination of a people and the millions more targeted for destruction. The pictures, the clothes, the toys, all tell of genocide, our word for 6 million acts of murder.

This Day of Remembrance marks more than a single historic tragedy, but 6 million important lives—all the possibilities, all the dreams, and all the innocence that died with them.

The Holocaust is defined as much by the courage of the lost as by the cruelty of the guilty. As Viktor Frankl observed, man is that being who invented the gas chambers of Auschwitz. However, he's also the being who entered those chambers upright, with the Lord's Prayer or Shema Israel on his lips. When all the crimes were finished, the fears realized, and the cries silenced, that was the hope that remained: to be remembered by the living and raised up by the living God.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:45 p.m. in the Rotunda at the United States Capitol. In his remarks, he referred to Israeli Ambassador to the United States David Ivry; Nobel Prize winner and author Elie Wiesel, former chair, Rabbi Irving Greenberg, chair, Ruth B. Mandel, vice chair, and Benjamin Meed, member, U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council; and Holocaust survivor, author, and human rights activist Simon Wiesenthal.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Fernando de la Rua of Argentina and an Exchange With Reporters
April 19, 2001

President Bush. I want to thank the President from Argentina for coming here. It is my honor to welcome a friend of America. This is a country that has been our friend for a long period of time, and I intend to keep our friendship strong, Mr. President.

I appreciate so very much your working hard to work through the economic difficulties that you've had. You're making a very strong effort to recover. I know it's been difficult, but you've been a very strong leader.

I appreciate also your willingness at times to commit troops as peacekeepers. Your country has been a very strong supporter of keeping the peace around the world.

I look forward to telling the President that one of the main strategies of our foreign policy is to have strong relations in our hemisphere. It begins with remembering our friends. The President represents a country that is a close friend of the United States.

So welcome, Mr. President. *Bienvenidos a los Estados Unidos.*

President de la Rua. Muchas gracias, Señor Presidente. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

[*At this point, President de la Rua spoke in Spanish, and a translation was not provided.*]

President Bush. Thank you, Mr. President.

Well, I have a couple of questions from—the United States will alternate to the Argentinean press, and back and forth for two rounds.

Ron Fournier [Associated Press].

U.S. Troop Deployment

Q. Thank you, sir. Mr. President, as part of your—this is a little off topic—as part of your broader review of troop deployments, are you considering pulling out of the Sinai? And if so, why?

President Bush. We are looking at all troop deployments around the world. Where we can reduce troops without creating instability, we will do so. One of the things I said during the course of the campaign and right after my inauguration is that we would be reviewing and looking at and analyzing our troop deployments.

I've always felt that we're overextended, which creates morale problems within our military. On the other hand, I understand we've made commitments, and we just

won't simply walk away from our commitments. We'll consult with our allies. We'll lay the groundwork for reductions if, in fact, we think it is in our Nation's best interest and the world's interest to keep reductions.

So to answer your question, we're reviewing all opportunities to reduce the amount of troops around the world.

Q. And that includes the Sinai as part of that review?

President Bush. We're reviewing every place we have troops deployed.

Argentina

Q. President Bush, are you ready to support Argentina to solve economic and social problems they're facing now?

President Bush. We are. Our Treasury Department is working closely with their counterparts in the Argentinean Government. We want our friend to do well economically. It is in our interest that a trading partner of ours be strong economically. We're working closely with the new Minister of Finance. We're listening to what he's doing. We believe the country is making progress. I'm aware of what the country and the leadership wants to do with the IMF, and we believe we're making good progress toward a stabilization plan.

That's the short-term solution, of course, is IMF help that now exists and whether or not the IMF is going to provide some kind of latitude toward the Government as it makes strides toward reforms. But longer term is what the President talked about, and that is to promote free trade, free trade all throughout our hemisphere. In one day's time, we'll both be in Quebec City talking about trade. And I'm going to be very aggressive about pushing a free trade agenda for the hemisphere, and I'm so pleased to hear the President say the same words.

Q. Mr. President, should you look at some——

President Bush. Let me say one thing. I think it may make sense, Mr. President, if you speak a little bit, and then let the translator translate. Unfortunately, not many people here speak Spanish, like I do. [*Laughter*]

President de la Rua. Thank you very much for your words of support and trust in our country. But please, I wouldn't like anyone to think I have come here to ask Mr. Bush money. [*Laughter*] We do have relations with the international lending institutions, and our financing is already insured. What we would want is more freedom in trade. And I very much value the support expressed by Mr. Bush for Argentina, where there are so many U.S. investments, and definitely, we would like this to increase.

President Bush. Grandfather [Bill Plante, CBS News]. [*Laughter*]

Sanctions and Energy Supplies

Q. Mr. President, should the U.S. look at easing some of the economic sanctions on Iran, Iraq, and Libya in the interest of getting more oil into this country?

President Bush. You know, we're looking at—in our energy review, we're looking at all opportunities to create more energy supply, to take the pressure off of price. At the same time, I think it's important for the country to review all sanction policies to make sure they are effective. And—but I have no intention as of this moment for taking sanctions off of countries like Iran or Libya.

We've made it clear to the Libyans that the sanctions will remain until such time as they not only compensate for the bombing of the aircraft but also admit their guilt and express remorse.

And as far as Iran goes, it's too early at this time in our relationships to really—it's one thing to consider; it's another thing to act on sanctions. I don't intend to do that anytime soon.

Uno mas.

Free Trade Area of the Americas

Q. Mr. President de la Rua, President Bush wanted the free trade agreement by

the year 2003, but I think Brazil is not too keen on that idea. So now, we're talking about 2005, which was the original date at the Summit of the Americas in 1994. Is that a real possibility, or will that date also pass by?

President de la Rua. The important thing is that agreement has been reached on that date in Buenos Aires. I celebrate the generosity and flexibility of Mr. Zoellick, who represented the President. An agreement was reached by all countries. In addition to the date, it is important for us to make progress in terms of the contents, in terms of the way to build a common market to benefit and integrate all countries.

President Bush. Let me say something about that. First of all, I don't want to dispute, of course, the supposition of your question. But I was asked—I think you asked me at a press conference, would I be pleased to see the date moved up, and the answer is, of course. The sooner we get a free trade agreement for the Americas in place, the better off the continent will be.

However, I recognize reality, and it looks like we're going to be aiming for the date 2005. But big progress has been made. And Ambassador Zoellick went down and met with other leaders in our hemisphere, and we've got the framework for an agreement. And not only that, after the Summit of the Americas, we'll be putting out the agreement itself or the framework of the agreement for people to review, so that citizens from all countries—this is the first time this has ever happened—where the citizens will be able to review the contents of the trade agreement.

But I appreciate so very much the President's commitment to free trade. He understands the power of trade, and he understands the promise of free trade. And I believe you're going to hear a strong statement at Quebec City that nations of our hemisphere are bound together by the concept of a free trade agreement. And it will be good for our people.

Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:02 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Minister of Economy Domingo Cavallo of Argentina. President de la Rua spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on Flooding in the Upper Mississippi River Basin
April 19, 2001

I know that all Americans share my concern for the displaced families and residents of Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, and Illinois. Yesterday the Mississippi River engulfed homes and businesses. Even more flooding is predicted in the upcoming days.

Those who live and work along the upper Mississippi are not strangers to the threat of spring floods. Since the 1993 floods, many communities and residents have taken measures to protect themselves and their property. They are to be commended for this preventative work.

At my direction, FEMA Director Joe Allbaugh and his staff are working closely with State and local officials throughout the impacted and threatened areas to closely track the flooding and any further damage. As I travel to Canada for the Summit of the Americas, I will continue to monitor the situation.

Remarks on Departure for the Summit of the Americas
April 20, 2001

Good morning. In a few moments Laura and I will depart for Quebec City in Canada to attend the Summit of the Americas. This meeting will bring together leaders from all 34 democratic nations in our hemisphere. Together we will put forward an agenda to strengthen our democracies, to tackle common challenges. And we will seek to expand our prosperity by expanding our trade.

This is an important meeting for the United States. The future of our Nation is closely tied to the future of our hemisphere. Many Americans trace their heritage to other parts of the Americas, which enriches our culture. Many American businesses are finding growth and trade in the Americas, which expands our economy. And all Americans have an interest in the peace and stability of our closest neighbors.

Our goal in Quebec is to build a hemisphere of liberty. We must approach this goal in a spirit of civility, mutual respect, and appreciation for our shared values. And we must make real progress.

Progress in this hemisphere requires an explicit commitment to human freedom. Only democratic nations can attend the Summit of the Americas. And every nation in our hemisphere, except one, will be there. This is an extraordinary achievement, one that would have been unthinkable just 15 years ago.

Progress requires a commitment to tearing down the barriers of poverty, disease, and ignorance so that every individual in our hemisphere may realize his or her full potential. The United States wants to work together with our neighbors to find ways to give all our children quality education, because learning and literacy are the foundations for democracy and for development.

Progress requires new efforts against illegal drugs. Our country is committed to bringing down the demand for drugs here at home. And we want to work more closely with countries where drugs are produced and traded so countries can better fight the supply of drugs at their source.

And progress in our hemisphere requires a renewed commitment to creating a Free Trade Area of the Americas. This will make our hemisphere the largest free trade area in the world, encompassing 34 countries and 800 million people.

We already know from the North American Free Trade Agreement that free trade works. Since 1994, total trade among Canada, Mexico, and the United States has more than doubled. NAFTA has created more choices at lower prices for consumers in all three of our nations. And it has created good jobs for our workers. Now is the time to extend these benefits of free trade throughout the entire hemisphere.

Open trade in our hemisphere will open new markets for our farmers and ranchers, workers and service providers, and high-tech entrepreneurs. It will fuel the engines of economic growth that create new jobs and new income, and it will apply the power of the markets to the needs of the poor. It will give new incentives for nations to reform their economies. It will reinforce our hemisphere's democratic gains, because people who operate in open economies eventually demand more open societies.

This third Summit of the Americas will take the next steps in creating an entire hemisphere that is both prosperous and free. *Es una tarea importante. Tenemos que aprovechar la oportunidad.* It's a great task and an extraordinary opportunity to make the Americas the land of opportunity. And I look forward to getting started this weekend in Quebec.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:50 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Leaders of Andean Nations in Quebec City, Canada
April 20, 2001

I want to thank you all for coming. It is my honor to host what I think is a very important meeting between the members of the Andean coalition and my country. I wanted to visit with the leaders face to face. I met President Pastrana before; it's good see him again. I have talked on the phone to some of the leaders. I want to assure the leaders here that our Nation looks forward to working with you, particularly when it comes to trade and commerce.

I want to assure the leaders that Plan Colombia means more than just the country of Colombia—I know that's of concern to the President of Ecuador—that we've got plans for all the countries in the region. And it's not just on helping to fight drugs. It's on making sure that the economies remain strong, that the infrastructure for education is in place. It is in our nations' interests that we cooperate together.

And so I appreciate the leaders for being here. It is my honor to host this discussion. I look forward to a very frank and honest exchange of areas where we can cooperate and, if there are some problems, areas that we can work together to solve the problems.

So thank you all for coming. *El honor es mio.*

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:51 p.m. at the Loews le Concorde Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to President Andres Pastrana of Colombia and President Gustavo Noboa of Ecuador. Prime Minister Javier Perez de Cuellar of Peru and Presidents Fernando Henrique Cardoso of Brazil, Mireya Moscoso of Panama, Hugo Banzer of Bolivia, and Hugo Chavez of Venezuela also participated in the discussions.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Central American Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters in Quebec City
April 20, 2001

The President. I want to thank the Presidents from some of the Central American countries for coming here. It's my honor to say, once again, hello to the President of El Salvador, the President of Panama, and the President of Honduras. Thank you all very much. I look forward to wide-ranging discussions on the benefits of trade, the need for us to continue to think about how best to have in place measures that will help in the case of future natural disasters, ways to continue to cooperate on issues of trafficking of people and arms and drugs.

So I look forward to a very fruitful discussion. I'm honored you all are here. *El placir es mio.*

I'll try to answer a few questions. Sandra [Sandra Sobieraj, Associated Press], have you got something?

Quebec Demonstrations

Q. Sir, the protests have really flared up outside. What do you have to say to the protesters?

The President. Well, if they are—if they're protesting because of free trade, I would say I disagree. I think trade is very important for this hemisphere. Trade not only helps spread prosperity, but trade helps spread freedom. And so I would just disagree with those who think that trade—somehow trade is going to negatively affect the working people and people for whom hope doesn't exist in some places. So we need trade, and I am convinced that the leadership that I met with agrees. And we can work together, because they understand that working together, we can bring prosperity throughout our entire hemisphere.

Secondly, I would hope that those out there expressing their opinion realize how important it is for the United States and Canada and Mexico to extend our agreements beyond our borders, to Central America and South America, where it's important to keep our neighborhood intact and to have a strong neighborhood. And these are our neighbors. I grew up in a world where if you treat your neighbor well, it's a good start to developing a wholesome community.

So I understand some people don't like trade; I just strongly disagree with them.

Trade Promotion Authority

Q. Mr. President, what are you telling summit leaders when they ask you how likely are you to get fast-track?

The President. Well, first of all, they understand that trade promotion authority, or fast-track, will be very important for us in order to make sure that we can fulfill our hopes to have a free-trading hemisphere. But we also can and will discuss bilateral agreements or agreements with groups of countries. So it's a dual-track strategy.

I hope Congress understands the hope and promise of trade promotion authority. It's important for the President to have trade promotion authority. It will make it a lot easier for us to complete the agreements that we're all discussing here in summits such as this.

Press Secretary Ari Fleischer. Final question.

Q. Mr. President, when you met with the President of Brazil——

The President. You again.

Q. Yes, it's me again—and the other Andean leaders, were they—just following up on fast-track, the fact that you don't have fast-track, did they express that as a concern?

The President. Well, not really. They were more interested in, one, our commitment to the neighborhood. Secondly, they were—we spent a lot of time talking about drugs and drug trafficking, and I assured them I understood that our Nation must do a better job of reducing demand and, at the same time, working with the Andean nations to eradicate supply. An issue that came up, and one that I was aware of, is that Plan Colombia could have the opportunity to spread the problems to neighboring countries outside of Colombia. And therefore, we have to put together an Andean initiative which recognizes that and, thirdly, that relations are—that we must have relations beyond just drug eradication. In other words, that we've got to work together to make sure the education systems in our respective countries fulfill their promise, that legal reforms are needed in some parts of the world.

And so we had a very wide-ranging discussion, and I was most pleased, by the way, that the President of Brazil joined in the discussion, because it was—I thought it was a very good signal of his understanding the importance of the Andean region. And he plays a very—his country plays a very important part and a very important role in that part of the world.

Q. Thank you.

The President. You got your wish. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 5 p.m. in the Montcalm Room at the Loews le Concorde Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Presidents Francisco Flores Perez of El Salvador, Mireya Moscoso of Panama, Carlos Flores of Honduras, and Fernando Henrique Cardoso of Brazil. Prime Minister Said Wilbert Musa of Belize and Presidents Miguel Rodriguez of Costa Rica, Arnoldo Aleman of Nicaragua, and Alfonso Antonio Portillo of Guatemala also participated in the discussions. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at the Summit of the Americas Working Session in Quebec City
April 21, 2001

Thank you, Mr. Prime Minister. *Amigo y amigos,* it's an honor to be here. First, Mr. Prime Minister, I want to thank you for your warm hospitality, and I want to thank all those folks in your government who have worked hard to make this conference a success. My fellow Presidents and Prime Ministers and leaders of our hemisphere's 34 democracies, it is a great honor to be here.

We have a great vision before us, a fully democratic hemisphere bound together by good will and free trade. That's a tall order. It is a chance of a lifetime. It is a responsibility we all share.

Quebec City is a fitting place for us to begin. Many of the great cultures that have shaped our hemisphere converge in this city. Before Champlain ever sailed the St. Lawrence, he sailed the Caribbean, visiting Mexico and Colombia, Puerto Rico and Panama. As a matter of fact, he was one of the first to propose a canal from the Atlantic to the Pacific so that trade may prosper. During the 400 years since Champlain's travels, our hemisphere, united by geography, has too often—too often—been separated by history of rivalry and resentment.

But we have entered a new era. The interests of my nation, of all our nations are served by strong, healthy, democratic neighbors and are served best by lasting friendships in our own neighborhood. My country, more than ever, feels the ties of kinship, commerce, and culture that unite us. And I'm proud to have the privilege so early in my administration to meet with all the leaders of this hemisphere's democratic countries.

Our task is to take the vital principles shaped at Miami and Santiago and translate them into actions that directly benefit the people we answer to. I'm here to offer my own ideas. I'm here to learn and to listen from voices—to those inside this hall and to those outside this hall who want to join us in constructive dialog.

The single most important thing we will do here is to reaffirm that this summit is a gathering of, by, and for democracies, and only democracies. Today, freedom embraces the entire hemisphere, except for one country. And we look forward to the day when all this hemisphere's peoples will know the benefits and dignity of freedom. José Martí said it best: *La libertad no es nogociable.*

We also understand that democracy is a journey, not a destination. Each nation here, including the United States, must work to make freedom succeed. Elections are the foundation of democracy, but nations need to build on this foundation with other building blocks such as a strong judiciary, freedom to speak and write as you wish, efficient banking and social services, quality schools, secure ownership of land, the ability to start and own a business. We

must strengthen this architecture of democracy for the benefit of all our people.

This is the spirit behind the American Fellows exchange program that I announce here today. This program will sponsor one-year exchanges of outstanding civil servants among nations throughout the Americas. We'll also provide resources to help reform and modernize judicial institutions, protect basic human rights, root out corruption and other threats to the institutions that sustain freedom.

Our hemisphere's support for democracy and freedom is principled, but it is also pragmatic. Freedom is not only a right; it is also our best weapon against tyranny and poverty. Some complain that despite our democratic gains, there is still too much poverty, inequality. Some even say that things are getting worse, not better. For too many, this may be true. But the solution does not lie in statism or protectionism. The solution lies in more freedom.

And that is why we seek freedom not only for people living within our borders but also for commerce moving across our borders. Free and open trade creates new jobs and new income. It lifts the lives of all our people, applying the power of markets to the needs of the poor. It spurs the process of economic and legal reform. And open trade reinforces the habit of liberty that sustains democracy over the long haul.

The United States will work for open trade at every opportunity. We will seek bilateral free trade agreements with friends and partners, such as the one we aim to complete this year with Chile. We will work for open trade globally through negotiations in the World Trade Organization. And here in the Americas, we will work hard to build an entire hemisphere that trades in freedom.

The history of our times is clear: Progress is found in pluralism; modernization is found in markets. Free enterprise requires liberty and enlarges liberty. Our commitment to open trade must be matched by a strong commitment to protecting our environment and improving labor standards.

Yet, these concerns must not be an excuse for self-defeating protectionism. We know from NAFTA that open trade works. Since 1994, total trade among Canada and Mexico and the United States has more than doubled. NAFTA has given consumers in all three nations more choices at lower prices. And it has created high quality, high—good wage jobs from the Yukon to the Yucatan.

The time has come to extend the benefits of free trade to all our peoples and to achieve a free trade agreement for the entire hemisphere. Our challenge is to energize our negotiations on a Free Trade Area for the Americas so that they can be completed no later than the year 2005.

In my first speech to our Congress, I made clear that achieving U.S. trade promotion authority was among my top priorities. I reinforced that message just 2 weeks ago, when I met to discuss trade issues with congressional leaders. When I return to Washington, I will put forward a set of principles that will be the framework for more intense consultations with Congress. I'm committed to attaining trade promotion authority before the end of the year. I'm confident that I will get it.

Partnership in trade is fundamental to the hemisphere's well-being. But we know it is not, by itself, sufficient to guarantee the quality of life we seek for ourselves and for our children.

Too many people in our hemisphere grow, sell, and use illegal drugs. I want to make this clear: The United States is responsible to fight demand for drugs within our own borders. We have a serious obligation to do so. And we will expand our efforts, with meaningful resources, to work with producer and transit countries to fortify their democratic institutions, to promote sustainable development, and to fight the supply of drugs at the source. This is a message I carried yesterday to

the leaders of the Andean countries. The United States so appreciates the difficult challenge they face in fighting drugs and stands ready to be a consistent and true partner.

We're also committed to deepening our cooperation throughout the hemisphere in fighting the spread of HIV/AIDS, responding to natural disasters, and making sure the benefits of globalization are felt in even the smallest of economies. These goals are at the heart of the Third Border Initiative that we have launched with the countries of the Caribbean.

We're committed to protecting the hemisphere's natural resources. That's why I'm committed to using the Tropical Forest Conservation Act to help countries redirect debt repayments toward local projects that will protect biodiversity and tropical forests. As the program demonstrates success, I'm prepared to work with Congress to boost the funding.

We're committed to making education a centerpiece of our economic agenda because learning and literacy are the foundations for development and democracy. The United States will sponsor the creation of Hemispheric Centers for Teacher Excellence. These centers will provide teacher training for improving literacy and basic education, both in person and over the Internet.

And finally, we will sponsor the creation of the new Latin E-Business Fellowship Program. This will give young professionals from throughout the Americas the opportunity to learn about information technology by spending time with United States companies. It will empower them with the skills and background to bring the benefits of these technologies to their own societies.

On the day I became President, I talked of liberty as "a seed upon the wind, taking root in many nations." For over two decades, our hemisphere has been fertile ground for freedom. So many men and women have left the shadow of oppression and fear. And for coming so far, this is not the time to grow timid or weary. Freedom is still our best weapon against tyranny and want.

In so many places in this hemisphere, liberty has been won. Now the blessings of liberty must be extended to every life. When we reach this goal by our unified efforts, we will inspire the world by our example.

Together, let us go forward to build an age of prosperity in a hemisphere of liberty. Together, let us use this Summit of the Americas to launch the century of the Americas. *Juntos podemos. Juntos lo haremos.*

God bless the Americas, and God bless her people.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:15 a.m. in the ballroom at the Hilton Quebec. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada. The President also referred to the Tropical Forest Conservation Act of 1998, Public Law No. 105–214.

The President's Radio Address
April 21, 2001

Good morning. As you hear this, I am in Canada for the Summit of the Americas, joined by leaders of 33 other democratic nations. Only one country in the Western Hemisphere is not represented, because that country, Cuba, is the only one that is not yet a democracy.

Democracy's progress in our part of the world is not total, but it is remarkable. We live in a hemisphere defined by the ideas

and aspirations of freedom. Some 800 million people live in the Americas; 11 million of them live under dictatorship.

We are pleased that many countries in the Americas joined us in passing a resolution this week at the U.N. Commission on Human Rights. They have called upon Cuba to respect the rights of its citizens. We know that for the people of Cuba, their day of freedom will come.

The future of our country is closely tied to the future of our hemisphere. Many Americans trace their roots to other parts of the Americas, ties that have enriched our culture. Many American businesses are finding new markets and opportunities in the Americas, which creates jobs at home and promotes economic growth abroad. And all Americans benefit when our closest neighbors are peaceful, stable, and enjoy stronger economies.

The forces of democracy in our hemisphere are strong, but they are threatened by poverty and illiteracy and the drug trade. So at this summit we are discussing a very practical agenda to strengthen democracy.

We must tear down the barriers of ignorance and illiteracy that limit the ambitions of so many children in our hemisphere and feed their frustrations. We will work with our neighbors to find ways to give all our children quality schools, because learning and literacy are the foundations for development and democracy.

We must make new efforts to confront the problem of illegal drugs. Our country is committed to reducing the demand for drugs at home, and we must help other countries fight the supply of drugs at their source.

And we must renew our commitment to free trade. The people of Canada, Mexico, and the United States have benefited greatly from the North American Free Trade Agreement. NAFTA has created good jobs in all three nations. Now we must extend those opportunities to all with a free trade agreement for the entire Western Hemisphere. This will be good for American workers, from farmers and ranchers to high-tech entrepreneurs. It will also be good for the poor in other countries, increasing their wages and opportunities. This is an agenda that stretches far beyond our borders.

But when I return to Washington tomorrow, the most pressing business concern: some long overdue reforms here in our own country. Early next week my plan to reform our public schools is expected to come up for debate in the Senate. It is the best chance we have had for meaningful education reform in a generation, and we must not waste it.

Education reform must be a bipartisan effort. I have reached out to Members of Congress in both parties, and we have achieved a broad consensus on major reforms. Yet the goal here is not just to pass legislation; it is to pass meaningful legislation. And some principles cannot be compromised. The final bill must have strong accountability for our schools, accountability developed by States and local jurisdictions. And for parents with children in failing schools, we must offer options. No parent should be left powerless and no child left helpless in a system that is not doing the job it is supposed to do.

There is a lot going on in Washington and the world—a summit, a tax relief debate, major education reform. But few things are as important as giving all our children the tools of learning. I hope you will support my education reform plan. And I hope you encourage your Senators to do the same.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9:15 a.m. on April 20 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 21. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 20 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Vicente Fox of Mexico and an Exchange With Reporters in Quebec City
April 21, 2001

President Bush. It's an honor for me to be with my friend, a friend of the United States, President Fox. He's a strong advocate of trade, and he's a strong advocate of good relations. Today I've decided that the first state dinner I will have as President of the United States will be with my friend Vicente Fox. We will have the state dinner in early fall, hopefully the month of September, depending upon our schedules. I look forward to a continued dialog on a lot of issues that concern our countries, a lot of issues that concern our hemisphere prior to the dinner. And of course, we look forward to welcoming you, sir, to Washington on that day.

President Fox. Yes, sir. Well, on my side, just to say that again we meet, and we meet always to keep the programs going, to keep the followup on the issues that we have been discussing. And I can say that we're working with speed, that we're moving ahead, and that issues like water that we——

President Bush. Yes.

President Fox. ——have created back in San Cristobal, Mexico, is running along and the same—other issues, like migration, like the rest—excellent. And right now, here in this meeting in Quebec, the main concern I think is—to all of us is, how do we move with sufficient speed ahead on the trade agreement of the Americas, which, as we had the opportunity to see today, everybody is in favor of it. And now our common responsibility, joint responsibility, is to structure a solid, solid project so that it's going to be to the benefit of everybody, a win-win proposal.

I really appreciate the commitment and the enthusiasm that President Bush showed on his presentations today. I think that's what we need in Latin America, that kind of support, that kind of push, that kind of dynamism that Latin America will take with our partner—in this case, the United States.

Missionary Aircraft Incident in Peru

Q. Mr. President, the United States had a surveillance aircraft tracking the missionary plane over Peru. Does the United States share any responsibility for it being shot down as a suspected drug plane?

President Bush. The United States is certainly upset by the fact that a citizen—two citizens lost their lives in Peru. Our hearts go out to the families, the community affected by the loss. I will wait to see all the facts before I reach any conclusions about blame. But right now, we mourn for the loss of a life—two lives. And I'm——

Labor and Environmental Protections in Trade Agreements

Q. In your speech today, you mentioned labor and environmental standards. Were you signaling that this will have to be part of future trade deals?

President Bush. I understand there's a lot of discussion about labor codicils and environmental codicils. What I was signaling is that we should not allow those codicils to destroy the spirit of free trade. In other words, a free trade agreement focuses on commerce, and that while I understand that some unionists are interested in making sure there's labor protections, I don't want those labor protections to be used to destroy the free trade agreement.

Secondly, it's very important for folks to understand that when there's more trade, there's more commerce, and there's more prosperity. And a prosperous society is more likely to be just. And a prosperous society is one more likely to have good environmental standards and be able to enforce those standards.

So I happen to think trade and clean air and trade and labor conditions—good labor conditions—go hand in hand. It's the poor nations that have trouble dealing with labor conditions. It's the poor nations that have trouble meeting their obligations to environmental quality. And I firmly believe, like my friend the President believes, that commerce and trade go hand in hand, which will yield a more prosperous society all throughout the hemisphere.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:41 p.m. in the Club Executive Room at the Hilton Quebec. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Observance of Earth Day
April 21, 2001

On April 22 each year for more than three decades, Americans have paused on Earth Day to celebrate the rich blessings of our Nation's natural resources and to take stock of our stewardship of nature's gifts. Each of us understands that our prosperity as a nation will mean little if our legacy to future generations is a world of polluted air, toxic waste, and vanished forests.

During the past 31 years, we have made progress on protecting our environment. America is truly blessed with a vibrant and flourishing environment. But with blessings come responsibility. There is much more to do. As we celebrate Earth Day on this April 22, 2001, I encourage Americans to join me in renewing our commitment to protecting the environment and leaving our children and grandchildren with a legacy of clean water, clean air, and natural beauty.

The President's News Conference With Summit of the Americas Leaders in Quebec City
April 22, 2001

[*Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada opened the news conference with brief remarks in French, and a translation was not provided. He then continued in English.*]

Prime Minister Chretien. We will start with the President of the United States.

President Bush. Mr. Prime Minister, thank you very much, and congratulations on a very successful summit. I want to thank you and your staff and the people of Quebec City for their hospitality.

I've been most impressed by the discussions we've had. It's clear to me that ours is a hemisphere united by freedom. It's a partnership that will help us tackle the big challenges that we all face: the education of our children, HIV/AIDS, protecting our environment. It's a strong partnership. It's a partnership that will help us all achieve what we want—is that everybody in our respective countries are able to succeed and realize their dreams.

I want to thank my fellow leaders who were here. This is my first summit, as you know. I've been most impressed by the quality of leadership. I am most thankful

for the generous hospitality each leader showed me. I listened a lot; I learned a lot. There's no question in my mind we have challenges ahead of us, but there's also no question that we can meet those challenges.

So, Mr. Prime Minister, thank you very much, sir.

Prime Minister Chretien. Thank you, Mr. President. And now we'll ask the President of Chile, Mr. Lagos, to say a few words.

[*At this point, President Ricardo Lagos of Chile, President Fernando de la Rua of Argentina, and President Vicente Fox of Mexico each made brief remarks in Spanish. Translations were not provided.*]

Prime Minister Chretien. I thank you very much, President Fox. And I now call on President Andres Pastrana.

President Andres Pastrana of Colombia. Thank you, Honorable Right Prime Minister. First, I'd like to thank you, Mr. Prime Minister, Mr. Chretien, and all of your people for your hospitality in these last few days, hospitality that we have enjoyed in Quebec. I think that those who preceded me have expressed the basic tenets of what has occurred here today. But now I would like to share what President Lagos said—back what he said with regard to the democratic clause and the importance of it for the Americas.

We have put all of our efforts as leaders of our democracies to strengthen our democracies. And as we have said throughout this summit, we must move from a political democracy to an economic democracy. Through that, we can seek improvement of living conditions of the most poor and the neediest amongst us.

If there is something that has brought us together or which unites us or what calls us here today at this summit—what calls 34 heads of state of the Americas together—what calls us together is our concern for human beings and particularly to improve the conditions of life, as I said, for the poorest and the most needy.

And as President Fox said, this is the opportunity to thank all 34 heads of state for their support to state politics, the process of peace in Colombia. Thank you for your support to a political and negotiated solution to the conflict which has torn asunder our country for the last 30 years.

And once again, as says the declaration, we support the peace process. Thank you for your support. And I would also like to call your attention to the uprising, to those behind it, to those who are marginalized and not following the law, and that this is enshrined in our declaration. We can and we will quickly reach humanitarian agreements with regard to the respect of human rights, respecting humanitarian international law, and especially to not exclude the civilian population.

Prime Minister Chretien. And now, I would like to give the floor to President Francisco Flores from El Salvador.

President Francisco Flores Perez of El Salvador. When the whole world is facing a creative, technological, and scientific revolution and countries become more and more integrated, it's key that leaders of the world understand that the possibilities of our countries are based on going from a view of the state as a closed and autonomous organ to a collection of open, integrated societies that support democracy and freedom.

And the definition of a new state is a basis to struggle against poverty, to respect the tremendous diversities that exist in the Americas, and the possibility of moving ahead in the world the way we want to move ahead, especially those of us who believe in principles.

If anything has been learned from the greatest and most recent tragedies in El Salvador, especially the last two earthquakes, is that the foundations of countries are not physical things; they are moral things. They are based on their strength and their belief in principles and in the belief of men, women, and their dignity.

I would like to thank the Government of Canada for hosting this meeting that has confirmed these values, which, I believe, are the basis for hope for the future in the Americas.

Prime Minister Chretien. Thank you. I thank President Flores. I give the floor to Prime Minister Owen Archer of the Barbados.

Prime Minister Owen Archer of Barbados. Mr. Prime Minister, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to share a perspective on behalf of the Caribbean. It is not only the smallest and most vulnerable region in our hemisphere but the smallest and most vulnerable region in the world.

From the outset in 1994, we were very clear that the exercise in which we are involved through these summits is greater than the mere creation of an integrated economic area, but must entail our creation of a program of development cooperation to support the emergence and the evolution of a truly hemispheric community for the Americas. And from the onset, we were clear that the effort had to stand the test of equity, had to stand the test of inclusiveness, and had to stand the test of relevance. It has to be relevant for today's purposes and tomorrow's needs. The Caribbean is pleased to be able to say that this summit has taken us a far distance to being satisfied in all of those tests.

We are not only living in the 21st century; we are now living in a new information age in which there is a great danger of a new dangerous inequality caused by a digital divide. And I believe that in the context of a 21st century society, this summit will stand as that summit where the leaders of the Americas determined that there should be no digital divide in our Americas, that the benefits of the new information technology have been brought within the reach of all of our citizens. Our connectivity agenda is, in my judgment, the most exciting new development from this summit, which I commend to the people of the Caribbean.

We are also very pleased that the arrangements for economic integration have now been so deliberately designed to truly accommodate the special concerns of the smallest and the most vulnerable entities in our hemisphere. And this summit has stood the test of equity.

May I also say, Mr. Prime Minister, that the Caribbean has used this summit, as well, and the meetings in the margin of this summit to lay a foundation for stronger bilateral relationships with our neighbors, particularly the United States of America, Canada, Central America, and the Mercosur countries and the Andean countries, and that we can leave this summit looking to the prospect of being part of a successful partnership in a successful neighborhood of the Americas.

I thank you.

Prime Minister Chretien. Thank you very much, Mr. Prime Minister.

And now the journalists have the floor.

Protesters and the Free Trade Agenda

Q. Mr. President, President Bush, I will direct my question to the Prime Minister of Canada, but we would very much like you to answer the question afterwards, if you don't mind.

[*A question was asked and answered in French, and a translation was not provided. Following his response in French, Prime Minister Chretien spoke in English.*]

Prime Minister Chretien. So I don't think that it is a question of our legitimacy. We are very legitimate. We were elected, all of us. And when you look at what was the Americas some 30 years ago and what it is today, look at the progress that democracy has made. Look at the clause that we have developed together at this time to make sure that democracy will remain in the Americas.

And a lot of people were invited to comment. We organized a parallel summit, at the expense of the Government. And they met; they discussed; they debated; they met

with ministers; there were ministers from my government and ministers from many other Governments that listened to them. And I'm very proud of the unions, for example, who decided to organize a parade of protest. It was done in a very orderly fashion. They made sure that those who wanted to break everything were not part of it.

There were some hundreds of them who had come with the goal of trying to disrupt us, and I want to say a great thank you again to the police of the city of Quebec, of the Province of Quebec and the Federal police for the way that they have handled the situation. We could see it on TV, and the restraint, the discipline they've shown is an example.

I guess in other summits there will still be some protesters, communicating among themselves on the Internet and so on, and they have the right to protest. But we will not tolerate breaking the peace of the people. In a democracy, you have a right to speak, but you have to respect the law.

And I don't know if the President would like to comment on that.

President Bush. Well, let me just say that I campaigned vigorously on a free trade agenda. There should be no question in anybody's mind in my country that I would come to Quebec City to promote trade.

For those who question trade and its benefits, I would urge them to look at the experience that we've had as a result of NAFTA. Canada has benefited; Mexico has benefited; the United States has benefited. Sure, there are going to be some who complain, and that's what happens in a democracy. But the overall benefits have been great for our three countries. And it served as an example to attract the positive opinions of other leaders who came to this summit. It's a positive example for the doubters to look at, for the skeptics to see that wealth can be spread throughout our hemisphere.

And we have a choice to make. We can combine in a common market so we can compete in the long term with the Far East and Europe, or we can go on our own. I submit—and I suspect the other leaders will echo with me; I hope they do, at least—that going on our own is not the right way to do so. Combining in a market in our own hemisphere makes sense. It's a logical extension of what's taken place through NAFTA.

There are some people in my country that want to shut down free trade. And they're welcome to express their opinions. I heard it throughout the campaign. But it's not going to change my opinion about the benefits of free trade, not only for my country and the people who work in my country and the people who wonder whether there's a future in my country, but the benefits of free trade for all the countries of this hemisphere are strong. And I intend to vigorously pursue a free trade agenda.

Prime Minister Chretien. Thank you.

Next.

Missionary Aircraft Incident in Peru

Q. Thank you, sir. President Bush, you talked at the summit with Peru's leader about the downing of a U.S. missionary plane in a joint U.S.-Peru mission. Your administration has not clarified the U.S. role in this incident thus far, so I'd like to follow up briefly. How much responsibility do we bear, since it was our spotter plane that identified the missionaries' aircraft for Peru's Air Force to pursue?

President Bush. First, the incident that took place in Peru is a terrible tragedy. And our hearts go out to the families who have been affected. Secondly, I did speak to the Prime Minister of Peru, who expressed his government's sincere condolences.

Our Government is involved with helping and a variety of agencies are involved with helping our friends in South America identify airplanes that might be carrying illegal drugs. These operations have been going on for quite a while. We've suspended such flights until we get to the bottom of the

situation, to fully understand all the facts, to understand what went wrong in this terrible tragedy.

Q. What was our role, sir, in the downing?

President Bush. Our role was to—like in other missions, Ron [Ron Fournier, Associated Press]—was to provide information as to tail numbers. Our role is to help countries identify planes that fail to file flight plans. Our role was to simply pass on information. But we'll get to the bottom of the situation. But I want everybody in my country to understand that we weep for the families whose lives have been affected.

Prime Minister Chretien. Next.

Trade Promotion Authority

Q. Good afternoon. I have a question for the President of the United States. Mr. Bush, you're personally committed to the liberalization of this hemisphere, but you don't have a broad-based mandate from the U.S. Congress to negotiate. What can the Governments of Latin America do to help you overcome the opposition of economic groups and of legislators in your country? Thank you.

President Bush. Write your Congressman. [*Laughter*]

I appreciate that so very much. That's the very same statement that the President of Uruguay asked. I am confident I will have trade promotion authority by the end of the year, because I think most people in the United States Congress understand that trade is beneficial in our hemisphere. We're going to proceed concurrently with that, parallel to that, with the trade agreement with Chile, and we hope to have that concluded by the end of the year.

But I've assured my colleagues that my administration will work to get trade promotion authority. Most Presidents have had what they call fast-track; we now call it trade promotion authority. And I intend to get it myself. It's in our Nation's best interests to have the President have that authority.

In the meantime, as I mentioned to you, my friend the President of Chile and I will instruct our respective and appropriate members of our administration to hammer out, negotiate, and effect a trade agreement between our two countries.

Argentine Financial Crisis

Q. President de la Rua, the question is for President Bush, but I would also like your answer, if you will, Your Excellency. President Bush, the United States Secretary of the Treasury gave direct financial aid to Mexico to overcome the tequila crisis and to stop propagation to the rest of the region. Given the economic financial crisis in Argentina is already spreading to neighboring countries such as Brazil, I'd like to know if the United States plans to give direct financial aid to Argentina, as it did with Mexico in the past?

President Bush. It's too early to make that determination. Having said that, Secretary of the Treasury O'Neill, as well as others in my administration, are watching closely the situation in Argentina. It is in our Nation's interest that the Argentine economy recover. That's obviously in the interest of neighbors that it do so, as well. But we're watching very carefully. We're in touch with your Government on a regular basis, and we'll make the determinations as to either bilateral aid or additional aid through the international financial institutions as the case merits.

Q. President de la Rua.

President Fernando de la Rua of Argentina. The support given by the President of the United States and the Secretary of the Treasury is of great value. And assistance to our country has come through multilateral financial institutions and other countries who have given us international guarantees. So this has insured a fiscal solvency in my country.

There is no risk, in my opinion, of problems in our country—this transitional problem in Argentina extending to neighboring

countries. Argentina, with international financial institutions' help, will be meeting the IMF's criteria and is endeavoring in a very determined fashion to reduce the fiscal deficit and to ensure fiscal solvency in every aspect. So there is no risk of any—that we need to be concerned about.

Next.

International Energy Resources

Q. I am from a newspaper in Mexico City, and I have a question addressed to President Bush and to Prime Minister Jean Chretien. Mexico, there is an issue that is of great interest, and I'm referring now to the power issue. I'd like to ask both of you, what is your view for what would be a hemispheric-wide energy plan? What commitments have you already reached, and what would be needed for such a plan to be equitable as between producers and the great consumers of power?

President Bush. Well, first, if Canadian suppliers and Mexican suppliers of energy and electricity are looking for a market, they've found one in the United States. We're short of energy. We need more energy in our country. Much of what will be explored, from the exploration perspective, will depend upon price. The farther away you get from market, the deeper the waters, the higher the price must be. But the price of energy is high enough to spur exploration activities on both sides of our border.

What the United States can do is to provide markets by better pipelines, across-border permitting, welcoming supplies of natural gas regardless of the country of origin. We can work with our friends the Mexicans in the south about the development of electricity. I have talked with President Fox about that, not only when I was in Mexico but also earlier this week, and will discuss this very issue with the Prime Minister and the President right after this press conference.

Part of our issue is to make sure our electricity grids are open enough to handle additional power, say, in the western part of our State, obviously the western part of Mexico. There is some very good news in our hemisphere, at least as far as Americans are concerned, and that is that because of technologies, the Canadians have developed vast crude oil resources in what appeared heretofore to be crude oil that could not be recovered from the ground in what they call tar pits—tar sands. And therefore, Canada is going to be the largest exporter of crude oil to the United States. That's good for our national security; it's good for our economy.

There's a lot of work we can do together. It is important for our hemisphere to not only trade liberally but to move energy throughout the hemisphere as needed, and it starts with the cooperation between Mexico, Canada, and the United States.

Prime Minister Chretien. I don't have much to add to that. I think that the market in the United States is a great opportunity for Canada. Already, as the President just said, we are the biggest exporter of oil to United States, and it will increase even more in the years to come. We have a lot of natural gas in Canada at this moment.

I remember, at the time when I was Minister of Energy, we had to sell our oil and gas in Canada to our consumers, to give them a market. Now we have a huge market there, but we have to make sure that the development of these resources will be done in a very effective way, that we have assured market. And we do that, having all the time in mind—we have to do that with the mentality that we have to do these things in protecting the environment. But there is a lot of opportunities, and we'll be discussing that later on this afternoon.

Next.

Colombia

Q. This question is for Mr. Bush. If Mr. Pastrana can react to it, too, and Mr. Chretien, if that's possible. Regarding the

declaration backing of the peace process in Colombia, Mr. Bush, would your government be willing to take a more active role and participate in this peace process? And how committed are you to the peace process in Colombia?

President Bush. We have funded Plan Colombia, which is over a billion dollars of U.S. taxpayers' money. That's a very strong commitment. At this summit, we laid out an additional Andean initiative of $880 million, monies not only to go to Colombia but the surrounding countries to Colombia, monies that recognize that not only is interdiction important, but also we need to develop infrastructure. We need to have sustainable crop replacement programs. So our country is committed to the region.

I believe firmly that President Pastrana is a strong leader who is doing everything he can to bring the peace. But it's going to be up to President Pastrana to make the peace. Once he does so, we'll stand by his side. And so our support has been strong, and it's been consistent. And we'll continue to support our friend the democratically elected leader of Colombia.

President Pastrana. Thank you very much for your question. Yes, I think that President Bush has—will resume what has been the help, $1.3 billion, the last year. He talked about a near $1 billion for this next year for what he has been calling the Andean initiative.

More than money, we are asking commerce—that's why we are asking the United States; that's why we were asking Europe. And that's why President Bush is committing in the extension of ATPA and the enhancement of ATPA, to try to get to really some preference that will allow us to get more employment for our people.

I think that President Bush is also very committed in drug addiction. I said yesterday to President Bush that a drug addict is a drug terrorist. One smell of cocaine in the United States is a death in Colombia. So that's why he's also very committed in working and fighting inside the United States. As you will know, the U.S. is expending nearly $20 billion in drug prevention programs. And he's really very committed to bring, also, down consumption in his country.

And I think that we had a meeting in Cartagena, the Andean countries, the ATPA countries: Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia. We invited Venezuela as an observer to the ATPA. And we hope that with the help of President Bush and with the help of the U.S. Congress, we will get the ATPA out before the end of this year. And that will bring us new opportunities for the poorest people of our country.

Prime Minister Chretien. And of Canada, I've assured the President that if they need us to play a certain role, we'll be available. There are some discussions to have certain participation. And if we can be useful, we'll be happy to help.

Free Trade Agreement for Central America

Q. I'm one of the Salvadoran journalists covering this summit. Bush, could you give us details regarding the negotiation of a free trade agreement with Central America? In particularly, Mr. Bush, if you have in mind a date to start the negotiations, if you have in mind a date to sign this agreement, and also if your administration is going to give special treatment to those Central American economies?

President Bush. Trade—I'm sorry, the very end of your question? Special trade——

Q. Free trade agreement with Central America.

President Bush. My first meeting here in Quebec City is with my—actually, not my first meeting—I had a meeting early—how quickly we forget—with our friends from Central America. And we talked about free trade, and we talked about the possibilities of a free trade agreement with a group of nations.

I did not dismiss that notion at all. As a matter of fact, it should be clear to people that as we discuss the agreement that

we're discussing here at this summit, that our Nation is willing to work with others, such as Chile, to negotiate bilateral agreements.

And so, I'm openminded is the way to describe that to you. And I think the leaders would tell you that we had a very frank discussion, and it's very possible—it's very possible that we'll be able to come to an agreement with a group of nations that would really make a logical extension from NAFTA. So, to answer your question, I don't have a date specific, but in my mind is the idea of that possibility.

Q. Will you support, Mr. Bush, any kind of special treatment for those Central American economies in this agreement?

President Bush. Well, that's what I was saying. I would be very openminded. As you know, we're committed in your country to helping with natural disasters. It's in our Nation's interest that your good country, with its brilliant young leader, be—help recover. It's going to be hard to have a good economic vitality and growth without the aid necessary to help recover from the natural disaster that took place. But I'm openminded.

Let me just say something on behalf of my Government about *el Presidente de El Salvador.* He is a breath of fresh air. He is a very bright light, and I've been most impressed by his candor, his leadership, his integrity. He's a great leader for your country.

Q. My question is for Prime Minister Arthur—and before I do, Mr. Arthur, you would be happy to know that westerners aren't doing too bad in Jamaica. Now, on the opening on Friday, you spoke of special considerations for the Caribbean in the FTAA process. There have been concerns about the OECD, IDB membership for some of the small states. Going into the conference, what were the Caribbean community and common market's primary concerns, and are you satisfied that these outcomes address these concerns?

Prime Minister Archer. As I said at the opening, we have committed ourselves to being part of the effort to build a truly inclusive hemispheric community. And one of our basic concerns, obviously, have been to ensure that our framework is in place to accommodate the needs of these smaller, more vulnerable entities within the community.

We are pleased that as a result of the trade ministers' negotiations in Argentina, we shall be embraced by heads of this summit, that there is a realistic framework in place for the completion of the Free Trade Area of the Americas, and that even more satisfying, that there are now clear mandates given to the individual negotiating groups that would enable us to be sure that we will translate the principle of special and differential treatment for smaller or more vulnerable societies into the final agreement that will anchor the Free Trade Area of the Americas.

The Caribbean was also concerned, having participated in the two previous summits, about the adequacy of the arrangements for implementation. I think we would be remiss were we not to say how heartened we have been, ourselves, by the statement of commitments given by the heads of the OAS, the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank—[*inaudible*]—to support our plan of action with appropriate resources and new institutional arrangements.

But you must believe me when I tell you that for the Caribbean, we are excited by the prospect of translating our human capital advantage into new industry in a new information age. Nothing matters more to us than to be able to leave a conference where there is a commitment to a plan of action to put the new information and communications technology within the reach of the people of the hemisphere, making it possible for us to contemplate a future of specialization as service societies in our new knowledge-based global society.

And for me, certainly, this connectivity agenda that will share the benefits of that new technology to small societies is an exciting opportunity that the Caribbean surely will not miss out on.

Prime Minister Chretien. Thank you very much, Prime Ministers. So this concludes the press conference. There will be another one in a few minutes by the officials of—representative of the regional banks and the World Bank and the political organization of the Americas.

Thank you very much. See you next time.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 1:40 p.m. at the Quebec Convention Center. In his remarks, President Bush referred to Prime Minister Javier Perez de Cuellar of Peru and President Jorge Batlle of Uruguay. President Pastrana referred to ATPA, the Andean Trade Preference Act. A reporter referred to FTAA, the Free Trade Area of the Americas; OECD, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development; and IDB, the Inter-American Development Bank. President Flores Perez's remarks were in Spanish, and they were translated by an interpreter. A portion of President Pastrana's remarks were in Spanish, and a portion of Prime Minister Chretien's remarks were in French, and both were translated by an interpreter. Portions of this news conference could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

North American Leaders' Statement
April 22, 2001

We met today in Quebec City for the first time as leaders of the three countries making up North America. We have come together as leaders of Canada, Mexico, and the United States, North American neighbors who share common values and interests. The ties that link us—human, social, cultural, and economic—are becoming stronger. Fully realizing the tremendous potential of North America is a goal we all share.

Increased trade and investment are cornerstones of a vibrant, expanding and more comprehensive North American Trade Agreement (NAFTA) since 1994 in bringing about a truly remarkable expansion of trade and investment among our countries. NAFTA has eliminated many barriers to trade, led to the elaboration of clear rules of commerce, and established effective procedures for the resolution of disputes. We will build on this progress by completing NAFTA implementation and by identifying ways in which NAFTA can ensure a more predictable framework for the further development of trade and investment within North America. We will work to deepen a sense of community, promote our mutual economic interest, and ensure that NAFTA's benefits extend to all regions and social sectors. Our governments will develop ideas on how we can work together to develop and expand hemispheric and global trade and promote broader international cooperation.

We consulted on the development of a North American approach to the important issue of energy markets. Towards this end, our Energy Ministers have created a North American Energy Working Group. This technical-level forum will be a valuable means of fostering communication and coordinating efforts in support of efficient North American energy markets that help our governments meet the energy needs of our peoples. We stressed the importance of energy conservation, development of alternative energy sources, and our common commitment to addressing environmental impacts of energy use.

Migration is one of the major ties that bind our societies, with migrants making significant cultural and economic contributions. It is important that our policies reflect our values and needs, and that we achieve progress in dealing with this phenomenon. We are committed to ensuring dignified, humane treatment with appropriate legal protections, and defense of human rights for migrants. We will strengthen mechanisms for trilateral cooperation to address the legitimate needs of migrants and take effective measures against trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling.

We reviewed the extensive cooperation underway among our three governments in areas as diverse as transportation, communications, health, justice, agriculture, and border issues. We discussed the growing links among citizens in our three countries and new partnerships in business, employment, education, travel, culture, and joint research.

These patterns of cooperation—by governments, business, and other members of civil society—are building a new sense of community among us. Our governments will review the trends, challenges, and opportunities facing North America at the dawn of a new century, and examine options to further strengthen our North American partnership. Conscious of the challenges we face but convinced of the need to seize the unprecedented opportunities before us, we encourage broad reflection in our societies on ways to advance the trilateral relationship.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Remarks to the American Embassy Community in Quebec City
April 22, 2001

Thank you. I used to call him Governor; I now call him Ambassador; I'll always call him friend. I appreciate you very much, Ambassador, and it's great to see your beautiful bride here, too.

I first want to say something about your immediate boss; that's the Secretary of State. As you're going to find out, he is a man who respects the job you do, a man who loves his country, a man who is going to be a fabulous Secretary of State for America. And I think the other three Cabinet Secretaries who are up here might do a pretty good job, too. [*Laughter*]

We've had a very interesting stay here in Quebec City. It turns out that Quebec City has now hosted three history-making summits. The first two in 1943 and 1944 involved only three world leaders. Therefore, they had it in one hotel. [*Laughter*] This one was a little more complex, it turns out. [*Laughter*]

When I see how much work it is to organize a Presidential visit, it surprises me sometimes that I'm welcome anywhere. [*Laughter*] And so, I want to thank you very much for the job the U.S. Mission did in preparing for our arrival, not only making sure that the arrival was well prepared, that when we're here, that it went smoothly. And it did, and you're to be congratulated.

We have no more important bilateral relationship than that with Canada. It's true the relationship doesn't always make the headlines in the United States. That's a good sign. [*Laughter*] Generally, when we make the news, it's because there is a dysfunctional relationship at hand. It shows what a good job you all are doing at relaying our priority to your fellow folks in the

Foreign Service or civil service in Canada, that we care about our relationship, that America knows how important it is.

And it's a vital relationship. As the Ambassador noted, the statistics are strong: 200 million border crossings a year; Canada is our biggest trading partner; Canada is the biggest exporter of energy to the United States. It's an important relationship. This administration will keep it that way, and I know you will join us in doing so.

I just finished an interesting luncheon with Prime Minister Jean Chretien and President Vicente Fox about how to expand the unique relationship our three countries have, called NAFTA, as you know. But it's an incredibly important relationship. I first came—became aware of the relationship as the Governor of Texas. I saw how important it was for us to understand that family values don't stop at the Rio Bravo River, that family values—that there are people in Mexico who are hungry and worry about their children, who, if they can make a better living somewhere else, will do so. Oftentimes it was in my State; occasionally it was in—more than occasionally it was in other people's State.

But I also saw the hope and promise of what trade could mean and good relations between the three of us. It meant better jobs in Mexico. It meant a mother or a dad might be able to find work closer to home, which is the aspiration of people in Mexico. It also means we've got to—it helps enable—to keep closer ties with Canada. And for that I'm grateful.

And so our discussions today was how to expand and strengthen NAFTA. And one way we can do so is through energy. America is short on energy; Canada is long on energy. America is short on energy; Mexico, with the right policy, could be long on energy. And so our discussions today were not only on other subjects, but we talked about establishing an energy group for the hemisphere, which we will do.

And the reason I bring this up is that it's an indication of why this future—our relationship is just as strong in the future as it is today. And it makes eminent sense for us to continue to work with our friends and allies in our hemisphere.

I leave the summit very optimistic about what took place here, because I want you to think about this interesting fact. We had all but one country represented here, because all but one country in our hemisphere has embraced democracy. For some of you oldtimers—I'm trying to find a few—there looks like a guy who might be an oldtimer. [*Laughter*] You know, we couldn't have said that long ago. It's an amazing fact. It's a wonderful testimony to freedom and democracy. So I'm very optimistic about what took place here. It gives us a great chance to expand the opportunities around our hemisphere, knowing that it will help our own country.

I've always believed that it's—the best foreign policy is one that improves your own neighborhood first. And so when I say a priority of ours is this hemisphere, it's not idle chitchat; it's reality, as witnessed by the fact that my first summit was a summit with leaders from our own neighborhood.

I want to say something about your Ambassador. He is a—you'll find him to be a good listener, a strong American. He is going to be a thoughtful manager. He's really a good guy. He's a good guy. [*Laughter*] And he married, like me, above his head. [*Laughter*]

I, too, want to thank the Deputy Chief of Missions, Steve Kelly. I want to thank the acting—the Consul General in Quebec City. I want to thank Nick Nixon, as well. I want to thank Roberta Smolik—Robin Smolik—Robert Smolik. [*Laughter*] I want to thank the guy who wrote this on the card wrong. [*Laughter*] Knowing how the Presidency works, there's a cardwriter somewhere pulling his hair out now. [*Laughter*] I want to thank Marina Nalli. Did I get it right? [*Applause*]

I want to thank you all very much on the American side for your hard work. I also want to thank Rejjie Tremblay. He made sure I got to my meetings on time. [*Laughter*] I hope word has filtered out of Washington that I believe on starting meetings on time. [*Laughter*] I don't believe in making people wait. I want to make sure that Lori Fortin gets thanks, as well. Not one member of this huge delegation had to sleep on a couch, thanks to you. [*Laughter*] I want to thank Fred Bishop. He's known as Emergency Guy. [*Laughter*] He fixed problems before they became emergencies.

I want to tell you all how much I appreciate your service to the country. It's more than just making sure the mission works—however, this mission worked well—it's to make sure the mission always works. I want to thank you for understanding that there is something greater than yourself in life, and that's the greatest country on the face of the Earth.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:13 p.m. at the Loews le Concorde Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to U.S. Ambassador to Canada Paul Cellucci and his wife, Jan Garnett; Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada; President Vicente Fox of Mexico; and Lois Aroian, U.S. Consul General in Quebec.

Remarks Honoring the NCAA Men's and Women's Basketball Champions
April 23, 2001

Welcome. Please be seated. This might be a long speech. [*Laughter*]

First of all, I want to welcome two great teams from two great universities. It is our honor to host you all here at the White House. I want to say congratulations to Coach K—the reason I call him Coach K is because sometimes I have trouble pronouncing long words. [*Laughter*] Coach McGraw and the players and the representatives from Duke and Notre Dame, welcome.

I want to welcome two fine United States Senators, Senator Helms from North Carolina, Senator Lugar from Indiana. Members of the United States Congress who are here, thank you all for coming.

In reviewing the rosters and the success of this club, it is clear that both Duke and Notre Dame recruited for athletic talent, but they also recruited character, as well. These championships go to prove that good people do finish first.

It is such an honor to welcome Duke back here. It turns out that there was another President named Bush that welcomed the Duke team. And they dedicated a basketball court right here on the South Lawn during that visit. The weather has been such that I haven't been practicing my skyhook lately. [*Laughter*] Looking at the size of some of these guys, I'm not sure I want to try to do it now, anyway. [*Laughter*]

I know it took a lot of hard work to get here, and there were some very close games and tough contests, particularly the Fighting Irish in their final—in the final game, won in the last second. I'm reminded about what Coach McGraw's son, Murphy, said as he watched the game. He said, "That was scary." Murphy, I know what you're talking about. It reminds me of election night. [*Laughter*]

There's no question that teams require good leadership. And I was struck by the quote of one of the stars here who said about Coach K—just to prove to the press I can say it—Coach Krzyzewski—[*laughter*]—"To me, he's been a friend, a mentor, and a brother. I am the luckier person for

having him had me as a part of my life." That's what leadership is all about. That's what it means to be somebody who can set an example and somebody who understands the responsibilities of the assignment. It's not just to win championships; it's to shape lives in a positive way.

And I loved what Coach McGraw said. She said, "Usually there are negative things that occur during the season. But this year I've had not to call a single team meeting; I've gotten no complaints from professors. We can't even yell at the players, because they do everything we ask." I need your help with Congress. [*Laughter*]

Championships bring an awesome responsibility. Not only do you win a trophy, I think you have the obligation of understanding that you have enormous influence on people's lives, people you don't even know. People look at the champs and say, "How does a champ behave? What is a champ supposed to do?" Champions not only cut down nets, but they can influence people's lives by sending positive signals by how they behave, not only on the court but off the court. It's a big responsibility. It's a huge responsibility. And that's why these two teams are so fortunate to have great teamwork and great players.

I know this was a team effort, and I'm sure the two players I'm going to mention, Battier and Riley, are going to be somewhat concerned that the President has singled them out. But I want to remind people who may not know their histories that not only were they great players, they're great people. Not only did they set goals about being the best on the basketball court, they set goals of becoming all-academic stars, and they were. They set goals of understanding the Golden Rule and living by it. These are good people. And I'm sure your teammates are, as well. But they set the kind of example that America needs.

And all of us who have got positions of responsibility—all of us, whether we're a President or a coach or a player or a president of a university—must understand that with that responsibility comes the necessity to set the right signal all throughout America that there's a difference between right and wrong, that we can be compassionate, and that we can love a neighbor like we'd like to be loved ourselves.

So it's my huge honor to welcome good teams and good people to the White House.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:20 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mike Krzyzewski, head men's basketball coach, and player Shane Battier, Duke University; and Muffet McGraw, head women's basketball coach, and player Ruth Riley, University of Notre Dame.

Remarks on the Observance of National Park Week and National Volunteer Week and an Exchange With Reporters

April 23, 2001

The President. It's my honor for me to welcome and to be in the presence of one of my finest ambassadors. The White House, I often say, doesn't belong to Laura and me; it belongs to the American people. And William Toth is a volunteer who works hard every day to ensure that every American feels right at home in the White House.

Mr. Toth has lived a life of service. In World War II, he served with distinction in General George Patton's army. He later became a professor at New York University. He worked hard to put his own daughters

through college, and when the youngest graduated, he retired. But he refused to rest.

For the last 9 years, Mr. Toth has been bringing smiles to visitors' faces as they arrive at the White House. Whether handing out gold coins to visiting children or passing out stories to adults, William makes sure that everyone leaves the White House with a memory.

America owes a great debt to William Toth. But like millions of volunteers across America, he will never ask us to repay it. And that's what makes his service, and the service of so many other volunteers, so unique.

The National Park Service has some of the best volunteers in the Nation. Whether it's here at the White House, at other sites around the Nation's Capital, or at the national parks around the country, National Park Service volunteers perform their duties with the simple goal of helping Americans enjoy our national treasures. They keep us connected to our history and help preserve America's natural beauty for future generations to enjoy.

That's why it's particularly fitting this week that we recognize both America's volunteers and America's national parks, for they both bring great joy to countless Americans.

At 77, William Toth continues to win over everyone he sees. In a letter she sent me last month, his daughter Dawn wrote, "I just want to let you know who you have in your corner. In some ways, he's America's most important diplomat. And he'll make you look darn good." I know that can sometimes be a difficult task, and I appreciate all the help I can get, William. [*Laughter*]

The truth is, Mr. Toth, you make America look darn good. I want to thank you for your tireless dedication, for working here at the White House. I want to thank the volunteers at the National Park Service, and the American people thank you from the bottom of their heart.

God bless.

Arms Sales to Taiwan

Q. Mr. President, will Taiwan get the Aegis radar system this time?

Q. ——sale to Taiwan?

The President. You'll find out when we make the—I make my decision clear.

Q. Have you made your decision, sir?

The President. Yes. I haven't made it clear yet, though. We'll let you know soon.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:57 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Dawn Foreman, Tracy Toth, and Melissa Eckert, daughters of Mr. Toth.

Remarks on Presenting the National Teacher of the Year Award
April 23, 2001

The President. Thank you all very much. Welcome to the Rose Garden. I was wondering if it was ever going to get warm in Washington. [*Laughter*] It does.

Mr. Secretary, thank you, and thanks for your kind introduction and thanks for your service to the children of our country. I don't know if you know this or not, but just last week in Monticello, Mississippi, there was a school named in Rod's honor. It's the school he attended as a young man.

What makes the story interesting is that students of his generation were segregated by race. No more in this great land called America. The Rod Paige Middle School will know loud and clear that education breaks

down any barrier to success. Mr. Secretary, you're a role model for students across America and for a couple of adults, as well.

Education Secretary Roderick R. Paige. Well, thank you. Thank you.

The President. And I'm proud to have you on my team.

Secretary Paige. Thank you.

The President. I'd like to thank the Council of Chief State School Officers, Scholastic, Inc., and the National Selection Committee for organizing this event. You've done a splendid job. And I want to welcome to the White House Peter McWalters, president of the Council of Chief State School Officers, and Gordon Ambach, its executive director.

And I also want to welcome and congratulate 56 teachers of the year from all across America. You know, I used to say as the Governor of Texas, you can never thank a good teacher enough. Well, I'm going to try to do it as President: Thank you all, from the bottom of our hearts.

I especially want to congratulate the finalists: Christa Compton and Tonya Perry, Derek Minakami and Michele Forman, the National Teacher of the Year. I'll have a few things more to say about Michele in a moment.

For a half century, the White House has hosted a ceremony honoring the National Teacher of the Year and the State Teachers of the Year. Every American President since Harry Truman has presented this award, and that's as it should be. What we honor tells the world what we value, and we value America's teachers.

"A teacher affects eternity," Henry Adams once wrote. He meant that their influence is unending. Teachers play a vital role in the intellectual and moral education of children. They teach children how to read and write, and they teach children right from wrong. They teach students to love knowledge and to disdain ignorance. Teachers inspire students, fire imaginations, nurture their natural abilities, and encourage them to explore the possibilities of life. They prepare good students to be good citizens. They also know, better than anyone else, they can't do it alone.

It's so important for the moms and dads of America to hear this message: Be a good parent; love your children; teach your children to read early in life; and support the teachers who are spending time with your most precious, precious part of your family.

One of my predecessors as Governor of Texas was a guy named Sam Houston. Sam Houston was a United States Senator, the Governor of two States, Texas and Tennessee. He was even a President—the President of the Republic of Texas. And yet, with all these impressive accomplishments, he wrote that being a teacher in Maryville, Tennessee, gave him a higher feeling of dignity and satisfaction than any other office or honor he ever held.

Well, this year's National Teacher of the Year, Michele Forman, demonstrates the dignity and satisfaction of teaching. Mrs. Forman teaches social studies at Middlebury Union High, in Middlebury, Vermont. She says this: "I think I have the best job in the world. Every day is something new."

Mrs. Forman arrives at school every day at 6:30 a.m., a full 2 hours before the students arrive. Three mornings a week she teaches Arabic, which she's been doing for the past 4 years. Students earn no credit by taking the course; they attend the classes because of their love of learning—and probably, mostly because of their love of Mrs. Forman.

Michele Forman knows her subjects and has high expectations for her students. She believes there must be a mutual trust between teachers and students. She's highly regarded by her colleagues. She's a woman of boundless energy and enthusiasm. In all these ways, she is an example of excellence in education.

And so it's a high honor to present to Michele Forman the National Teacher of the Year Award.

[*At this point, Mrs. Forman made brief remarks.*]

The President. Well, Michele, thank you very much. In keeping the fine tradition of never missing to want an opportunity—[*laughter*]—or to waste an opportunity, let me say a few words about a pressing issue and a great opportunity for our country.

This week the United States Senate will begin debate on what's known as S–1, appropriately named because it is my number one priority, it is your number priority, and it's an education reform proposal. This is not just about another legislative debate. It's the best opportunity in a generation for having meaningful education reform come out of Washington, DC.

And we have an ambitious goal: All our children, every child in America, must have access to a safe and high quality school, so we make sure that standards are high. It's so important to raise the bar and expect the best from every child, just like you do; that results are tested—people shouldn't fear accountability systems in America. We want to know. We want to know whether children can read and write and add and subtract. And if not, we'll make sure they do early, before it is too late, and that schools are accountable.

We give more States more flexibility and freedom. We trust teachers in the classrooms, as opposed to having mandates out of Washington. We've got to trust teachers and principals to chart the path for excellence for every child, provide greater options for parents with bipartisan support for charter schools or public school choice or private tutoring programs.

In separate legislation we are working for liability reform to support and protect teachers who enforce reasonable standards of conduct in their classrooms. We're encouraging more of America's best and brightest citizens, including those who have served in the Armed Forces, to become teachers. This is a project near and dear to my wife Laura's heart. Unfortunately, she's not here. I wish she was, because she could explain a lot better than I could, but she's out traveling the Nation, reminding people that one of the most noble professions ever is to be a teacher, and recruiting teachers. And she's doing such a good job, I need to send her up to the Congress to convince them to behave.

We'll increase spending on education and focus that new spending on reforming schools that aren't performing well or on a powerful reading initiative.

I support historic new levels of education funding. Yet all of us know better schools require more than just funding. And I hope the Senate hears that we need meaningful education reform by high standards, accountability. My education reform has a good balance of new dollars.

Now, one of the interesting things that historians learn—and Michele is an historian—is that the President proposes, the Congress disposes. But the truth of the matter is, the people rule. And I hope the people of America contact the Members of the Senate and insist upon a passage of a well-balanced, meaningful reform package that will enhance our teachers' ability to do what you do well, which is to teach our kids.

It's an honor for me to be here. I welcome you to the Nation's Capital. And once again, thanks from the bottom of my heart, on behalf of all of America, for doing the job you do.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:50 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Remarks to the Environmental Youth Award Winners
April 24, 2001

Thank you all very much. It's my honor to be here. First, Christie Todd, you're doing a great job. I knew I was going to pick—I knew she was going to do a great job when I picked her. I didn't realize how good. And she really is—I'm proud to have her on my team.

I want to thank the parents who are here. I know it's a proud moment for you, and it should be. It means you've done your job. I always like to remind folks who are lucky enough to have a child, the most important job you'll ever have is to love your children and to be a good mom and dad. I want to thank the sponsors who are here, and I look forward to thanking you all personally after this brief speech. [*Laughter*] Please don't break out in applause. [*Laughter*]

The Congress is back, and it's good to see three fine Members of the Congress here. I thank you guys for coming, Zach Wamp of Tennessee, Mark Kirk of Illinois, and Wally Herger of California. Thank you guys for being here. I know you're here to represent your constituents, and I know you're proud of your constituents, just like we are, as well.

But most particularly, I want to thank the winners. I had the opportunity of having my picture taken with the winners, and it looks like I might have a chance to have a few more after this is over. [*Laughter*] Right, guy? [*Laughter*]

For three decades now, the Environmental Protection Agency has helped to carry out our national commitment to the wise care of the environment. The agency has worked with many private citizens who understand that each have a duty to be good stewards of the land and life around us. And that's what we're honoring today.

Interesting thing is, is that we're honoring youngsters. You would think that the old folks would be the ones leading the charge in America and many places. But it's our young who are doing so, particularly when it comes to cleaning up the environment, and for that we're grateful. It really does speak to a great future for America, I think.

And rather than going through all the impressive accomplishments, just like Christie Todd did, I do want to talk a little bit about good environmental policy. It starts with a commitment. And my administration has a commitment to clean air and clean water and good soils.

Laura and I are fortunate enough to own a ranch in central Texas. I like to remind everybody that if you own your own land, every day is Earth Day. If you live off the land—the people who care more about that than the people who live off the land—the reason I bring that up is because I want—a good policy understands the proper role of the Federal Government. The proper role of the Federal Government is to set high standards, to set goals, but it's to work with local folks to achieve those goals.

Not all wisdom is in Washington, DC, as witnessed by what took place up here. All of us in Washington don't have all of the answers to all of the problems. Our job is to work in a collaborative way with people at the local level. As Christie Todd said, we'll fund more, and we will.

We've got money in our budget to fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the first time. It says we'll work with local folks to set aside lands that need to be protected.

We've got money in our budgets to repair the national parks. Here, the Federal Government is talking about a clean world and a clean environment, and yet we're not even keeping our own parks; we're not fulfilling our own responsibilities. It seems

like to me, if we want to set a good example for the rest of the country, we've got to take care of what we're—over which we're in charge. And we're going to do so at the Federal level.

We've got some regulatory policy in place that makes sense. But it says we're going to make decisions based upon sound science, not some environmental fad or what may sound good—that we're going to rely upon the best of evidence before we decide. Ours is a policy that truly believes that technologies have advanced to the point where we can have economic growth and sound environmental policy go hand in hand.

Oh, there's a lot of talk recently about energy. And for those of you in California, you know we need more energy. For those of you who are living in the biggest State in our Union, who have suffered blackouts—and some of us think there may be more blackouts coming—we've got to come up with an energy policy for America. But I firmly believe we can do so and protect the environment.

The whole world doesn't have to be zero-sum. It doesn't have to be that, you know, we find more energy and, therefore, the environment suffers. You see, we've got technologies available now to make sure that we explore and protect the environment at the same time, and we need to do that. We need to be good stewards of the land. But we've also got to understand, if we don't bring more natural gas to the markets, we're going to have blackouts. We've also got to understand, in order to power the power-generating plants that are now being built in California, we need more energy.

And I want to assure the young up here that this is an administration committed to good, sound policy. And it's an administration that firmly believes that the technologies are developed to the point where we can be good stewards of the land and, at the same time, bring the energy to market that we need. We'll base decisions on sound science. We'll call upon the best minds of America to help us achieve an objective, not only here at home but around the world, which is: cleaner air, cleaner water, and better use of our land.

It's such a wonderful inspiration to see the young of America standing up here who are setting a good example for all of us. And so, on behalf of our Government and the American people, I want to congratulate the winners, their parents, and their sponsors.

God bless you all, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:15 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Christine Todd Whitman.

Message on the Observance of Armenian Remembrance Day
April 24, 2001

Today marks the commemoration of one of the great tragedies of history: the forced exile and annihilation of approximately 1.5 million Armenians in the closing years of the Ottoman Empire. These infamous killings darkened the 20th century and continue to haunt us to this day. Today, I join Armenian Americans and the Armenian community abroad to mourn the loss of so many innocent lives. I ask all Americans to reflect on these terrible events.

While we mourn the tragedy that scarred the history of the Armenian people, let us also celebrate their indomitable will which

has allowed Armenian culture, religion, and identity to flourish through the ages. Let us mark this year the 1700th anniversary of the establishment of Christianity in Armenia. Let us celebrate the spirit that illuminated the pages of history in 451 when the Armenians refused to bow to Persian demands that they renounce their faith. The Armenian reply was both courageous and unequivocal: "From this faith none can shake us, neither angels, nor men, neither sword, fire or water, nor any bitter torturers." This is the spirit that survived again in the face of the bitter fate that befell so many Armenians at the end of the Ottoman Empire.

Today, that same spirit not only survives, but thrives in Armenian communities the world over. Many Armenian survivors and their descendants chose to live in the United States, where they found safety and built new lives. We are grateful for the countless ways in which Armenian Americans continue to enrich America's science, culture, commerce and, indeed, all aspects of our national life.

One of the most important ways in which we can honor the memory of Armenian victims of the past is to help modern Armenia build a secure and prosperous future. I am proud that the United States actively supports Armenia and its neighbors in finding a permanent and fair settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute. I hope that this year we will see peace and reconciliation flourish in the south Caucasus region between Armenia and all its neighbors. The United States welcomes the opportunity to support the courageous efforts by the Armenian people to overcome years of hardship and Soviet repression to create a prospering, democratic, and sovereign Republic of Armenia.

Let us remember the past and let its lessons guide us as we seek to build a better future. In the name of the American people, I extend my heartfelt best wishes to all Armenians as we observe this solemn day of remembrance.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus
April 17, 2001

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

In accordance with Public Law 95–384 (22 U.S.C. 2373(c)), I submit to you this report on progress toward a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus question covering the period February 1 through March 31, 2001. The previous submission covered events during December 2000 and January 2001.

The United Nations continued in its efforts to sustain the proximity talks that started in December 1999. The United States remains committed to the United Nations effort to find a just and lasting settlement to the Cyprus problem.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 25.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Significant Narcotics Traffickers Centered in Colombia
April 17, 2001

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia that was declared in Executive Order 12978 of October 21, 1995.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 25.

Remarks in New Orleans, Louisiana
April 25, 2001

The President. Thank you all very much. Thank you all. It's an honor to be here. This ballpark kind of reminds me of home. And seeing my friend Will Clark, who used to play for the mighty Texas Rangers, it really reminded me of home. I want to thank you for being here, Will.

I also want to thank my friend David Vitter, the great Congressman from this district, for his introduction. I'm pleased to have been traveling today, as well, with the Congressman from northern Louisiana, John Cooksey. I appreciate John being here. And you should appreciate them, as well, because when it came to trying to figure out what to do with the people's money, they stood strong for tax relief.

At the airport when I arrived, it was good to see my old friend and fellow Governor, the Governor of Louisiana, Michael Foster. And with Mike was a friend of mine, the elections commissioner of the State of Louisiana, Suzie Haik Terrell. It's good to see Suzie, as well. Just to make it clear that tax relief is not necessarily a Republican idea or a Democrat idea, today I'm proud that Karen Carter and Lambert Boissiere, both good elected Democrats here in the State of Louisiana, stand in this crowd in solid support of tax relief on behalf of the working people.

And finally, before I get going, there are two folks here who I'm glad they're here—I wish I would have been here to hear them sing—Mr. Percy Sledge and Aaron Neville.

After this, I'm going to Arkansas, and then I'm going to spend a couple of days in my State of Texas. I'll be spending some quality time with the First Lady, and she's going to be envious to know that I got to shake Percy Sledge and Aaron Neville's hand.

By the way, I'm proud of the job that Laura is doing. One of the things she is doing is traveling our country, reminding people of how important it is to be a teacher, telling the teachers of this good land how much we appreciate them, but also telling those young and old alike that if

you're looking for something to do, if you want to make a contribution to our Nation, become a teacher. Teaching is a noble profession. And there is something very fundamental about making a contribution to our Nation.

The truth of the matter is, if you want to start making a great contribution to our Nation, if you happen to be a mom or a dad, remember this: The most important job you'll ever have is to be a good mom and dad. If you have the honor of being a mother or a father, the most important contribution you can make to this land is to every day tell your child you love them with all your heart and all your soul.

I wish I knew the law that I could sign that would say we would love each other like we'd like to be loved ourself. There's no such law. But there are some laws we can pass to help people with their lives. And that's exactly the kind of budget I submitted to the United States Congress. It's a Congress that's focused and principled. It's a budget that says we could spend more money on the public's education system around America. It's a budget that prioritizes education.

The biggest increase of any budget—of any Department in my budget goes to the Department of Education. It signals a priority. But I haven't forgotten where I come from, either. I know that Washington doesn't have all the knowledge necessary to run the schools. As a matter of fact, I'm against mandates. I'm for freedom at the local level. I believe in local control of our schools.

We're making progress. We're making progress, and I appreciate so very much the cooperative efforts of both Republicans and Democrats in Washington to craft a bill that embodies these principles. First, we've got to set high standards when it comes to educating our children. Everybody understands that if you set low standards, you get low results. When you raise the bar, when you expect the best is when you start getting the kind of results we want in America.

Secondly, embodied in the principle involved in the bill that I submitted and we're working on, it says we've got to trust the local people to run the schools in America. It says we've got to trust the local people to make the decisions for children. The people who care more about the children in Louisiana are the citizens of Louisiana, and we must empower the citizens to make that choice.

But also a principle in the bill that's working its way through the Senate says that we want to know results in America. We've got to know. We don't want the Federal Government setting up a test, but we want local people to devise accountability systems that let us know whether or not our children are learning to read and write and add and subtract. It is so important that we measure. It is important to use measurement not as a way to punish but as a way to solve problems early, before it's too late.

I refuse to accept a system that will not hold people accountable, a system that will just shuffle through children through the system without regard to their knowledge base. Now, we can do better in America. We can do better by asking the question to our children: "What do you know?" And if you don't know what you're supposed to know, we will make sure you do early, before it's too late. No child should be left behind in the great land called America.

In the budget I submitted to the United States Congress, I sent this priority: We better make sure we pay the people who wear the uniform of the United States a decent wage. I have the awesome responsibility of being the Commander in Chief of the United States, and that means making sure that morale is high amongst our troops. That means good pay; that means good housing; that means good training. And that means having a Commander in Chief who respects the men and women

who wear the uniform and who, in turn, earns the respect of the men and women who wear the uniform. [*Applause*]

Behave yourself. [*Laughter*]

There's always a lot of talk when it comes to the budget, that if we try to share the people's money with them, that somebody is not going to get their Social Security check. Hopefully, these days of that kind of rhetoric are gone from the political discourse. Hopefully, the days of trying to scare people, days of trying to frighten people are behind us. That kind of politics is divisive and unnecessary.

The reality is, the budget I submitted and the budget most people agree with—this part of the budget most people agree with—says that we will spend payroll taxes, those taxes aimed for Social Security, on one thing and one thing only, and that is Social Security.

We have made a commitment to our elderly in America. It is a commitment this administration will keep. But if you're young in America, you better be wondering what the Social Security system is going to look like tomorrow. There's not going to be enough people paying in by the time you get to need Social Security. We've got to think differently. On the one hand, we're going to protect our seniors. But on the other hand, we better let younger workers, at their discretion, manage some of your own money in the private market so you get a better rate of return on investment.

There's a lot of concern about the health of our seniors, as there should be. The budget I submitted doubles the Medicare budget over the next 10 years. It doubles the amount of folks who will be served at community health centers over the next 5 years. It provides tax credits for the working uninsured. This is a good budget. It is a sound budget. And it meets the Nation's priorities.

It increases discretionary spending by 4 percent. That ought to seem like a lot for people whose pay raise hasn't gone up by 4 percent over the last couple of years. Four percent is greater than the rate of inflation; 4 percent is a hefty increase. But for some in Washington, 4 percent is not enough.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. For some in our Nation's Capital, they don't think 4 percent can meet the Nation's needs. And that's where we're having a major disagreement. The truth of the matter is, the budget last year grew at—the discretionary budget last year grew at 8 percent. The bill that came out of the Senate, again, grows the discretionary spending by 8 percent. And if that were to continue, the discretionary budget of the United States of America would double in 9 years.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. There's a fundamental argument going on in Washington, DC, and it's, what do we do with the people's money? That's what the argument is about. And my point I make to Washington is, after we meet priorities and grow the budget at 4 percent, we ought to be understanding where that money comes from. The surplus isn't the Government's money. The surplus is the people's money. Let me make the case a little further.

We increase discretionary spending by 4 percent. As well, in the budget I submitted to the Congress, we pay down debt by $2 trillion over 10 years. We've also got another trillion set aside for contingencies. Oh, there are contingencies all the time when it comes to the Federal level. There are emergencies. Sometimes our farmers need a little extra help because of emergencies. And we're going to meet those obligations. This is a sound budget. It leaves money unspent. That's always dangerous when it comes to Washington, DC, leaving money unspent. [*Laughter*]

I was campaigning on this very issue in Iowa, and a lady got up and she said, "You know, the budget debate in Washington reminds me of what it was like when I had my grandchildren in the house." And I said, "Well, why was that?" And she said, "Well,

because I always made cookies. And when I left the cookies on the kitchen table and the grandchildren came through, they always got eaten." [*Laughter*] "They were never left."

Well, that's what happens to U.S. taxpayers' money. If you leave it sitting around in Washington, it's going to get spent. And it's going to get spent on bigger Government. What we need to do is set priorities and always remember whose money we're talking about. And so I submitted a plan that does just that. And the two Congressmen with me today, they stood strong on the side of the working people in Louisiana and voted for that tax relief.

What you hear in Washington is—a lot of times you hear people saying, "Well, I'm for tax relief, just so long as only a certain number of people get it." That's right. That's what we call targeted tax relief. That means somebody in Washington gets to pick the winners, and somebody gets to pick who doesn't win. That is not our view of fair tax relief. Everybody who pays taxes ought to get tax relief in America.

So ours says, everybody who pays taxes gets relief. We cut all rates. We cut the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent. That's important, because there are people in America struggling on the outskirts of poverty. There are people working hard that aren't getting ahead. And not only did we cut the bottom rate, we increased the child credit from $500 to $1,000 per child.

One of the things that troubles me most about our Tax Code is—the example I like to use is a single mother, working hard to get ahead. By the way, she's working the hardest job in America. Raising children by herself is the toughest job in this country. Under this Tax Code, if she's barely getting ahead making 22,000 a year, say, raising two children, for every additional dollar she earns, she pays a higher marginal rate on that dollar than someone who is a successful Wall Street stockbroker, for example. And that's just not right, folks. That's not what this country is about.

The message in the Tax Code ought to be, the harder you work, the better it is the chance you've got to get ahead in life. And so we reduced the bottom rate, and we increased the child credit. This code needs to be more fair.

But there's a lot of them up there saying, "Well, you can't drop the top rate. That's not fair." Well, first, if you pay taxes, you ought to get relief.

And secondly, you can help me send this message to Washington: The small-business owner in the State of Louisiana is likely to be a sole proprietor; he's likely to be a Subchapter S; generally, he's not going to pay corporate income taxes. Therefore, he's going to be paying personal income tax rates. By dropping that top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent, we're sending this message: The role of Government is not to create wealth, but the role of Government is to create an environment in which the entrepreneur can flourish, in which the small business can grow to become a large business. Dropping that top rate sends the clear message: We want more money in the pockets of the small-business owners so they can expand and grow their businesses.

The Tax Code we submitted makes the Tax Code more fair. It addresses inequities. It makes the code more responsive to hard work. But it also recognizes the role of family in society. The marriage penalty is unfair, and we've got to do something about taxing marriage in America.

And you know what else is unfair? Taxing a person's assets twice. In our country, called America, if you're a farmer or a rancher or a small-business owner and you pass away, your heirs have to pay taxes twice. They pay taxes when you get profitable, and they pay taxes when you die. The death tax is unfair, and for the goodness of America, we need to get rid of it.

Now, that's the plan I submitted. Now, when I was campaigning in Louisiana during the campaign, I came and talked like this, and a lot of people heard it and

cheered. But I must confess, a lot of the punditry kind of had a blank stare on their face. They thought I was, as they say, whistling into the wind—[*laughter*]—that there was no chance we would get any tax relief.

But thanks to the hard work and the phone calls and e-mails of hundreds of Americans from across the country, we have begun to define the parameters. Out of the House came a $1.6 trillion plan. And now the Senate, somewhat reluctant, but nevertheless they passed a $1.2 trillion plan. Because of you all, because of the voices of America, tax relief is on the way.

And there's two important reasons why it must happen. The first is, we have a little slowdown in our economy, and tax relief will help. It's a part of how we recover the steam necessary to get our economy chugging again. And I'm confident with tax relief, we'll send a message—one, it will encourage long-term investment, but the tax relief package I look forward to working with the Senate and the House on will also have a retroactive feature to it, will get money in people's pockets quickly. It'll help recover this economy. And it's necessary. It is necessary.

But there is another reason. It has to do with the people. You know, sometimes with public policy we like to talk about ideology and numbers and charts. But behind every good public policy is the question, how do we help people?

Today, in the crowd, we've got the Rogelstads, somewhere behind—there they go, right there. And I've asked them to come—it's Katie and Dustin. Katie is a receptionist; Dustin is a sales rep. More importantly, they're a mom and dad of Lawson and Karli. They've come for a reason, because I want to share with you what happens to this one Louisiana family when we have tax relief—the Congress passes the plan that the House passed. And when it's fully implemented, these good folks who now pay 3,390 in Federal income taxes will save $1,850 a year. You know, some will say, well, you know, that's 1,850—that may not be a lot for—but that's a lot for them. It's a lot for them, given the fact that we've had no energy policy in America and therefore energy prices are going up on the American people. It's a lot for people who struggle with credit card debt.

Now, this tax relief package, we're talking about live Americans who will benefit in a real way. You see, and the question is—and this is the fundamental question facing Washington, DC—once we meet fundamental obligations and pay down debt, once we increase discretionary spending by 4 percent, what do we do with the money left over?

The other way to look at it is, who do you trust? Do you want the Congress spending this $1,850, or do you want these people spending the 18? And we stand on the side of the families in Louisiana. It's who do you trust: Do you trust the Government, or do you trust the people? And you've got an administration that stands squarely on the side of the people of America.

And not only do I trust you when it comes to your own money; I trust you when it comes to asking for your help and maybe convincing some of the members of the Louisiana delegation who don't see it our way, to see it our way. You're one e-mail away from letting somebody know how you feel. You're one stamp away from saying, "Meet priorities, but trust us with our own money. Meet priorities, but remember whose money it is you're spending up there."

You see, we can not only afford tax relief, but my point to the Congress is, we can't afford not to have tax relief. It is so important to trust the people of America, because that's why our Nation is so different and strong, because of our people.

This is a fabulous country, and I'm so honored—I'm so honored to be your President. I'm able to stand up—I'm the President of the greatest people on the face of the Earth, hard-working, God-fearing people, people who walk outside their

house on a regular basis and say to a neighbor in need, "What can I do to help?" They don't need the Federal Government telling them how to love a neighbor; they do it out of the goodness of their heart. No, this is a land that is so strong because every single day there are countless acts of kindness where neighbor helps neighbor, or church member says to a child who wonders whether or not there's a future for him or her, "Somebody loves you."

My call to America and to the Congress is, let's free the good hearts of the American people. Let's not stand in the way of faith-based and community-based programs that are trying to help people in need. Let's unleash—let us unleash not only the creative passions of America through tax relief; let's unleash the compassion of America through a Faith-Based Initiative that recognizes the great strength of our country lies in the hearts and souls of our loving citizens.

We're making a difference in Washington—I say "we" because I stand up there with you all—that there's a new attitude in our Nation's Capital. We've still got a lot of work to do. But it's an attitude of respect. We need to have debates with the people in mind, not debates trying to say, "My party is better than your party," or debates that say, "Well, I'm going to tear this person down so I can do better." That's not what America should be about.

Slowly but surely, we're ushering in a culture of respect in the Nation's Capital. It's important to do so. And as importantly, all of us must work together to usher in a culture of personal responsibility into America, a culture that says each of us are responsible for the decisions we make in life, responsible for loving our children, responsible for helping a neighbor in need. And I understand my responsibilities, which is to uphold the high honor of the great office of President of the United States.

So I want to thank you all for coming out. I am honored to have you by my side. Let's work hard, and we're going to bring tax relief where it belongs, to the people of America.

God bless, and God bless America. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:45 p.m. at Zephyr Field. In his remarks, he referred to former Major League Baseball player Will Clark.

Statement on Senate Action on Legislation To Clean Up Brownfields
April 25, 2001

I am pleased that the Senate has passed legislation to clean up the Nation's brownfields. Environmental reforms must set high standards and get results. This legislation will allow communities to reduce environmental and health risks, capitalize on existing infrastructure, and create jobs. I commend the Senate for their bipartisan approach to this important environmental reform.

Remarks on Arrival in Little Rock, Arkansas
April 25, 2001

Thank you all for coming. It's my honor to be back in Arkansas. It's great to be with my friend the Governor. We got to know each other when I was the Governor of a neighboring State. I respected him then; I continue to hold him in high regard. Governor Huckabee is one of the more popular Governors in the country because he's done in office what he said he would do.

It's also my honor to come to Arkansas to support a good friend of mine and a good friend of Arkansas, Senator Tim Hutchinson. This is my first trip as a—my first fundraising trip since I became the President. It's the first time I've really gotten what they call political, and it's for a good cause. This man has done a really good job for the citizens of Arkansas, and I would like to see him returned to the United States Senate after next year's elections. He and I are working together on a lot of issues that matter to the Arkansas folks, a budget that is good for Arkansas, and a tax relief plan that will benefit some 787,000 people who live in this State.

And the budget is focused. We increase a Federal education funding from 366 million to 390 million. We increase Head Start funding from $57.4 to $58.5 million. There's an estimated 379 million targeted for highway funding in Arkansas. This is a responsible budget that leaves room for tax relief, but also focuses on issues that matter to the folks of Arkansas. And coming down on the airplane, he and I spent a lot of time talking about agriculture.

One of the things the Senator talked about was there were a lot of farmers hurting in this State. And I assured him I understood that. And the point I want to make to the people is that when this election comes around in 2002, I hope the people of Arkansas realize how important it is to have a United States Senator who can walk into the Oval Office and say, "Mr. President, the people of Arkansas need your attention." And I can assure you when Tim Hutchinson walks in the Oval Office and says the people of Arkansas need my attention, they're going to get my attention.

And so, it's my honor to be here with this good United States Senator. I urge the people of this State to realize what a good man they've got in office. And I thank the people of this State for the prayers and support they've given me since I've been the President.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:07 p.m. at the Little Rock National Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Mike Huckabee of Arkansas.

Remarks at a Reception for Senator Tim Hutchinson in Little Rock
April 25, 2001

Well, Tim, thank you very much. It's my honor to be back in the great State of Arkansas. We were just reminiscing about the campaign. I remember—I was kind of tired, because it was the last day of the campaign, and I was on the airplane flying into Arkansas, wondering whether or not I could give one final speech. And we landed up there in northwest Arkansas, and there was about—I don't know, 17,000 people inside the area and another 17,000 trying to get in. And I had that funny feeling

right there that not only could I not only give the speech, but I had that feeling things were going to go okay on election day in Arkansas. And they did, and I want to thank you all.

I want to thank Tim Hutchinson for his help in getting me here. More importantly, I want to thank him for his help as a United States Senator. I'm here for one simple reason: This man needs to be returned back to the United States Senate, come elections in 2002.

It's good to see the Lieutenant Governor, Win Rockefeller, and wife, Lisa Ann. Thank you all for being here. Every time I came back to Arkansas, it seemed like Win was able to make time for his old buddy the Governor of Texas, and I appreciate that very much, sir. Thank you very much.

It's great to be here with former State Senator Jim Keet. It's good to see you again. He reminded me in 1988 when I campaigned here for the man we affectionately call "Number 41"—[*laughter*]—I'm "Number 43"—but we campaigned together for a great President, my dad, in 1998 together, and it's good to see you again, sir.

It's also great—Nick Bacon is here, Medal of Honor winner, an American hero, a man who represents the veterans of this State incredibly well. You need to know, Nick, that the veterans have got a friend in the White House. And it's my honor to be the President, not only the Commander in Chief of those who wear the uniform but a President who understands that those who used to wear the uniform need to be well represented in Washington, just like you're doing here in Arkansas. And Dennis Rainey of the FamilyLife ministry and Pastor Robert Smith, thank you all for being up here.

I'm sorry my wife isn't here with me. She is in Crawford, Texas, and I'm headed to Crawford, Texas, after this speech. [*Laughter*] They say, "Well, you must not like to live in Washington because you like to go to your ranch or Camp David." Well, I like to do both. I like—I love my life in the White House. I love getting up every morning and going into this majestic office that we call the Oval Office. As Tim said, it is an honor to be the President of the United States, and I view it that way, but I also like to stay in touch with the people that got me here. I like to get outside of Washington. I like to go to where the space is open, where I can walk around with Spot and Barney, the two family dogs. [*Laughter*] My wife loves our country—the country house we've got, and so do I, and so I beg your forgiveness for not eating dinner here tonight. I am here to thank you for supporting Tim. I do want to give some remarks about what I think is going on in Washington, but then I'm fixing to get on Air Force One and take it to Crawford, Texas. [*Laughter*]

By the way, our family is happy. I'm really proud of the work that Laura is doing. She is—people are learning about west Texas women. They sometimes don't say a lot, but when they speak, people do listen. She's a great listener. And she's doing the country a great service by traveling our Nation, convincing people, both young and old alike, to become teachers, reminding people that teaching is a noble profession and that you do the country a great service if you end up in the classroom. We're working on Troops to Teachers programs that take retired teachers—I mean, retired military folks and help them become a teacher. And she, as well, is working with youngsters who are just getting out of college and saying, "Be a teacher. It will be a huge contribution to America," and people are listening. And for that, I am grateful, and I know you are, as well.

As Tim mentioned, I think we are making good progress in Washington, reminding people that we're up there for a reason, and it's not just politics. We're up there to get some things done on behalf of the American people. And Tim's helping—a lot. And he mentioned tax relief.

I want to remind people that before the tax relief debate started because of me, he had already been up there talking about increasing the child credit for people who are raising children in America. Well, now, one of the key ingredients in our tax plan is doubling the child credit, and that's an important part of tax relief. It's an important part of tax relief, particularly when you drop the bottom rate in our Tax Code, like we're advocating. And the reason that's important is because there's a lot of folks in our country who live on the outskirts of poverty who are working hard to get ahead and, as a result of the way this Tax Code is structured, as they begin to get ahead, pay a higher marginal rate on dollars earned than somebody who is successful.

I love to use the example, because it helps make my case as loud—as clearly as I can, about the single lady working in any State in the Union, trying to get ahead. She may have two children. First, it's important for Congress to understand she's got the toughest job in America. Raising children on her own is the hardest work in our country, coupled with the fact that for whatever reason, she's making $22,000 a year. The way this Tax Code is structured today, for every additional dollar she earns, she pays a higher marginal rate on that dollar than someone making $200,000 a year. And that is not fair, and that's not what America is about, as far as we're concerned.

So tax relief, when you combine dropping the bottom rate from 15 to 10 and increasing the child credit, it makes the Tax Code more fair and more equitable. It inculcates this principle: The harder you work, the more money you ought to put in your pocket in America. And Tim understands that.

Well, I've heard a lot of the debate about taxes. You know, they say, "Well, George W., he only cares about the wealthy people." That's because I believe if you pay taxes, you ought to get tax relief. What I don't subscribe to is this business about Washington, DC, people being able to pick and choose the winners. That's code word for targeted tax cuts. That means elected officials get to sit in a room, and they get to say, "This table over here gets tax relief, and this table doesn't." Our attitude is, if you pay taxes, you ought to get relief. That's the only fair thing in America.

We dropped that top rate, just like we dropped the bottom rate. And there are two positive effects when you do so. First of all, it sets a principle, that the Federal Government should take no more than a third of anybody's check. It's time we have some principles in the Tax Code. One, the code ought to be more fair. Two, our Federal Government doesn't need to take more than a third of anybody's check. And secondly, it's important for the policymakers in Washington to focus on the reality of dropping the top rate. By dropping the top rate, we stimulate investment. We send a clear message that ours is an entrepreneurial economy.

The role of Government is not to create wealth. The role of Government is to create an environment in which the entrepreneur or the small-business person can flourish. And these Senators that are balking on this plan must understand that most small businesses all across America are unincorporated. They're Subchapter S's. They're sole proprietorships. They don't pay the corporate tax; they pay the personal tax. And by dropping the top rate, we're sending a clear message that small business must thrive and flourish in America, that we want our entrepreneurs to have more cash so they can expand their payrolls, create new investment opportunities. No, the way to deal with this Tax Code is to recognize if you pay taxes, you've got to get relief. And that's what this Senate must hear loud and clear from the people of Arkansas.

We're trying to do something about the marriage penalty. This Tax Code of ours sends the wrong signals. It taxes marriage. We ought to be rewarding marriage. We

ought to be encouraging families in the Tax Code.

And finally, one area the Senator and I are working closely on, it's an area dear to the hearts of a lot of people—doesn't matter whether you're Republican or Democrat—and that's this business about the death tax. The death tax is unfair, and we need to repeal the death tax in the code. It's unfair to tax a person's assets twice. I've talked to hundreds of people all across America who've heard this message about repealing the death tax, and they come up to me and say, "I've worked all my life. I started with nothing. It looks like I'm going to end up with something, and it should be the American right to be able to pass my assets on to my children without the Federal Government making it impossible for me to do so."

This is a State with a lot of farmers. And Tim and I spent a lot of time talking about agriculture, coming down here. And I understand that some in the agricultural sector are hurting. And I understand there is pressure—what they call urban sprawl in some areas. Well, if you're worried about urban sprawl and if you're worried about the farmer, why don't we make it easier for people not to have to sell their farm upon death? We need to get rid of the death tax, and the Senate needs to hear that loud and clear.

I'm sure you've heard the arguments—I certainly have—that, well, if you have a $1.6 trillion tax cut, the Government is not going to be able to meet its needs, that by letting people keep their own money, the Federal Government is going to starve to death.

Well, let me tell you about the budget that Tim has supported and I proposed. It increases discretionary spending by 4 percent. Now, there are some parts of our budget that are going to grow based upon what they call entitlements. That's like Social Security. And Social Security, by the way—we've set aside all the payroll taxes, and they're only going to be spent on Social Security. This business about letting Congress dip into Social Security, that's over with. People have got to understand the Social Security system is safe and secure and sound under a Bush administration.

But discretionary spending grows in my budget at 4 percent. Is that enough? Well, 4 percent is greater than the rate of inflation. Seems like it's enough to me. Four percent is greater than most people's paychecks increase by. That ought to be enough. But it's not enough, and over the objections of Senator Hutchinson, the United States Senate passed a discretionary budget of 8 percent.

Now, what does 8 percent mean? If we increase the discretionary budget by 8 percent, on an annual basis, it means that in 9 years the discretionary budget of the United States of America will double. And when you double the discretionary budget of Federal spending, you crowd out capital in the private sector, and it's a drag on the U.S. economy. This Congress needs to be able to live within its means, and 4 percent is plenty.

We've got some choices to make: Bigger Government or a stronger economy. And we've got some choices to make, once we meet the needs of the Government: Who do we trust with the money? Who do we trust? And that's the question I'm asking Washington to think about. Senator Hutchinson trusts the people, and so does President Bush, because we understand this surplus is not the Government's money. The surplus is the people's money. And we've got to trust them with their own money to make decisions for their family. It's a fundamental, philosophical question.

Some of your members here of the congressional delegation are struggling with that question. Who do you trust? Who do you trust with that additional money? And Senator Hutchinson has no problems making the statement loud and clear. Once we meet our needs in Washington, he trusts the people, the people of Arkansas to make the right decisions for their families and

the children, make the right decision on how they're going to save and what they're going to do with their money.

And we've got some priorities in the budget, and that's one reason why I think it's safe for me to say that the budget meets the needs. Instead of trying to be all things to all people, it sets clear priorities. Education is a priority in our budget, and it should be a priority in the budget. The Department that gets the biggest increase of any one, of any Department in my budget, is the Department of Education. And let me tell you what we do in it.

I've made reading a priority in our Nation. I fully understand if you can't read, it's going to be hard to get ahead. One of the worst things that's happened is, we've just shuffled children through the system who are illiterate. And that has got to end in America, and it starts by having the Federal Government make a commitment to sound reading programs, diagnostic tools. And so we've tripled the amount of money in the Federal budget, money that's accessible by the local school districts.

We tripled character education funds. It's one thing to teach children to read and write, but we also have to teach them right from wrong in America. And so we make money available for local school districts for character education.

Teacher training is a priority. So we increase teacher training funds by 18 percent from 2001 to 2002.

No, we set priorities in the budget. And I appreciate Senator Hutchinson's leadership on the Labor and Education Committee in the Senate. He talked about a bipartisan consensus, and we're getting there, because the principles inherent in the bill are sound and make sense. It's a commonsense approach to education.

It says, first and foremost, this Nation must set high standards for the children to go to school. If you set low standards, guess what you get? Low results. And so we set high standards and high expectations. Secondly, we know who is best to chart the path to excellence, and it's not in Washington, DC. This bill and reforms that we're proposing in Washington will pass power out of Washington because I strongly believe, as does Senator Hutchinson, in local control of schools.

We've done something different at Washington, DC. We have said, "Listen, we've spent a lot of Federal money, and some of it makes sense. And if you receive Federal money, you have to account for it." It's time to have a results-oriented approach to public policy. And it says, if you receive money, you must measure. It doesn't say the Federal Government should measure; it says the State of Arkansas ought to measure. And you ought to test, and you ought to let us know whether or not children are learning to read and write and add and subtract. And if they are, there ought to be ample praise in society. But if they're not, instead of just quitting on children, instead of just shuffling through the school system, we've got to end that practice.

Up until now, much of public education has asked the question to our children, "How old are you? If you're 10, you're supposed to go here, and if you're 12, you belong here, and if you're 16, you go here." And guess what happens in a system that simply asks age as opposed to, "What do you know?" Children get shuffled through the system. And many times, sadly enough, they're inner-city kids. It's so much easier to quit on a child than to take the extra time to teach them.

The system must stop asking the question, "How old are you?" and start asking the question, "What do you know?" And if the children do not know what they're supposed to know early in life, we need to correct those problems, because there are no second-rate children in America as far as this administration is concerned. There are no second-rate dreams. And the education reform package we're sending sets this clear and profound goal: Not one

single child will be left behind in the great country called America.

I take my obligation to defend our country very seriously. I'm proud to be the Commander in Chief. And I fully understand that to enhance morale in the United States military, it requires a Commander in Chief who honors the men and women who wear the uniform and, in turn, earns the respect of the men and women who wear our uniform. And secondly, in order to boost morale, we must increase pay, and my budget does so. It improves housing. And my budget does so. And Tim Hutchinson stands side by side. We need modern defenses. And he and I agree strongly that the Little Rock Air Force Base is important for the future of this country. He not only looks out for Arkansas; this Senator looks out for America. And for that, I hope the people of this great State are grateful.

You will hear those who make every excuse in the world to keep your money in Washington say, "Well, the Bush budget or so-and-so votes means that somebody is not going to get adequate health care." In the budget I submitted to Congress, we doubled the Medicare budget over a 10-year period of time. In the budget I submitted to Congress, we doubled the number of folks who will be served in community health centers in America over a 5-year period of time. In the budget I submitted for America, we have tax credits for working uninsured. We have a President who is saying to Congress, "Instead of just talking about these health care issues, let's get something done on them." And my budget reflects that, and that's an important priority of ours—the health of our citizens.

And finally, I believe that Senator Hutchinson and I and others, but Republicans and Democrats, are doing something that's immeasurable. You can't talk about it in terms of the budget. But they're working hard to change the tone of Washington, DC. I have pledged to the American people to change the tone of our Nation's Capital so that when people look at Washington, they are proud of what they see. I believe most Americans of either party are sick and tired of needless partisan bickering and name-calling and finger-pointing.

We need to spend our energy getting things done, not passing the blame. And we're making good progress. There is a culture of respect that's beginning to emerge in Washington. I'm beginning to notice that the rhetoric is toning down just a little bit. I hope people realize that good public policy means good politics. And we don't need to be spending all our time on politics in Washington. It's time to focus on the people's business. Tax relief is in the people's interest. It's good for our economy. It's good for our people.

This doesn't have to be a, "Well, I can't vote for that bill because it might make George W. Bush look good or some political party look good." We need to get the attitude in Washington, DC, we've been elected for a reason, and that's to stand up and do what each of us think is right on behalf of the American people. Tim Hutchinson understands that. I hope all Senators understand that. And if they understand that, then the dialog is going to be much, much more civil, much more responsible.

And that's what we need in this country. We need responsibility. We need to usher a period of personal responsibility, where each of us understands we have the awesome responsibility to be a good citizen. If you happen to be a mom or dad, you have the awesome responsibility of loving your children with all your heart and all your soul. If you're a fortunate citizen in this country, you have the responsibility of putting your arm around a neighbor in need and say, "Brother or sister, somebody loves you. Somebody cares."

One of the most profound initiatives that we are working on—one of the most profound initiatives that we are working on is the Faith-Based Initiative that welcomes people of faith and community and good heart into the compassionate delivery of

help for people who need help in America. We should not fear faith in America; we ought to welcome faith. It changes lives and changes hearts.

We're making good progress toward ushering in a period of personal responsibility. But it requires people serving in Washington who understand the reason they are there. And I firmly believe Senator Tim Hutchinson understands the reason they are there. He loves and cares about the people of Arkansas.

And by the way, as this campaign gets going, you might turn to a friend or neighbor and say, "It makes a lot of sense for Arkansas to have somebody who can walk into the Oval Office. It makes a lot of sense for our State, with the problems we have, to have a United States Senator be able to pick the phone up and say, 'Mr. President, I'd like to discuss the concerns of the people of Arkansas. We've got some problems with our farmers; I'd like to discuss the concerns. We may have a problem in our education system; Mr. President, I'd like you to hear me out. I'd like to deliver a message on the people of Arkansas.'" And I can assure you, folks, that the person running this race who will have the ear of the President of the United States is Senator Tim Hutchinson.

So I want to thank you all for coming. Thank you for your generous support. Work hard. We need this man in Washington, DC.

God bless. And God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:53 p.m. at the Statehouse Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Nick Bacon, director, Arkansas Department of Veterans Affairs; and Dennis Rainey, executive director, FamilyLife.

Statement on the Anniversary of Ukraine's Closing of the Chernobyl Nuclear Plant

April 26, 2001

Last year on December 15, Ukraine ended one of the darkest chapters of the Soviet legacy and opened a new stage in Ukraine's evolution into a modern European state when it permanently closed the Chernobyl nuclear plant.

Closing Chernobyl created the circumstances for a safer and more prosperous Ukraine for future generations. We are reminded of this today on the 15th anniversary of the terrible accident at Chernobyl and are again grateful that an environmental threat has been removed from the Central European landscape.

Today's anniversary is an occasion for the global community to pause and reflect on the lessons provided by this disaster, to recall the valor and dignity that the people of Ukraine displayed in the face of adversity, and to acknowledge the suffering that many victims of Chernobyl continue to endure throughout the region.

I am proud of the American people's role in helping to alleviate this suffering—at the time of the tragedy and continuing through today. I am proud of our continued efforts to work with Ukraine to improve nuclear safety and mitigate the harsh social impact of Chernobyl's closure on the local population.

Much work remains to be done in Ukraine's transition to a modern European state. This work will require strong and courageous leadership over the coming months and years. It will require real support for democracy and difficult but necessary reforms. Last year strong Ukrainian

leadership and committed international assistance achieved great results in Chernobyl. I urge Ukraine to stay on the path of reform it set out upon last year. Former U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt once noted that "it is only through strife, through hard and dangerous endeavor, that we shall ultimately win the goal of true national greatness."

I firmly believe that Ukraine's national greatness rests in Europe and in its transatlantic and global ties. The United States stands ready to work with Ukraine as it undertakes the political and economic reforms necessary to build these ties that are so vital to the brighter future Ukrainians seek for themselves and their children.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Legislation Regarding Unborn Victims of Violence
April 26, 2001

America's children represent our greatest hope for the future. I commend the House for its bipartisan passing of the "Unborn Victims of Violence Act," which will make it a separate felony to harm an unborn child in the course of committing any one of 68 Federal offenses. This legislation affirms our commitment to a culture of life, which welcomes and protects children.

Remarks at a Celebration of Reading in Houston, Texas
April 26, 2001

The President. Thank you all very much. Thank you very much. Laura and I are really glad to be back in Texas. [*Laughter*] I didn't realize, Dad, until I saw that video, how different your life has been since I'm the President and you're not. [*Laughter*] Sounds like it's been pretty rough. And perhaps you and I should sit down and have a discussion, talk about it. Let me think: I have an opening the 27th of September. [*Laughter*]

We have some other family issues to discuss, like where to put my Presidential Library. [*Laughter*] I've decided not to go through the hassle of raising money. And so, you know my dad's library? We're just going to add "And Son." [*Laughter*] As you can already tell, lately my dad has been calling me "43." I call him "41." It's kind of shorthand we have in our family. And we have a nickname for Mother as well. To show you where she stands in the power structure of this family, we call her "Number One." [*Laughter*]

And so I'm going to turn the stage back to Number One, and then close the program with some remarks of my own. It's really great to be back in Houston and to return bearing the proudest title ever been given to me: Son of Barbara and George Bush.

[*At this point, the program proceeded.*]

The President. Well, thank you. Thank you, Laura. Once again, thank you all for that warm welcome. I know all of you join me in thanking the authors for being here tonight. The readings were fantastic, and we appreciate it.

You've certainly set a high standard for a little reading I intend to do tonight.

[*Laughter*] Now, some people think my mom took up the cause of literacy—[*laughter*]—out of a sense of guilt over my own upbringing. [*Laughter*] That's one reason why she was so happy I married a teacher.

The truth is, I guess I could have paid a little closer attention when I was in English class, but it all worked out okay. [*Laughter*] I'm gainfully employed. [*Laughter*] And I even have a new book out, and I brought along a copy. Right, here it is. I didn't actually write all of this, but I did inspire it. [*Laughter*] Some guy put together a collection of my wit and wisdom—[*laughter*]—or as he calls it, my accidental wit and wisdom. It's not exactly a world transformed, but I'm kind of proud that my words are already in book form. [*Laughter*] And I thought tonight I would share a few quotable passages with you. It's kind of like thoughts of Chairman Mao—[*laughter*]—only with laughs and not in Chinese. [*Laughter*]

Here's one. And I actually said this. [*Laughter*] "I know the human being and fish can coexist peacefully." [*Laughter*] Now, that makes you stop and think. [*Laughter*] Anyone can give you a coherent sentence, but something like this takes you to an entirely new dimension. [*Laughter*]

Here's another: "I understand small-business growth; I was one." [*Laughter*] My, do I love great literature.

I said this up in New Hampshire: "I appreciate preservation. It's what you've got to do when you run for President." [*Laughter*] "You've got to preserve." You know, I really don't have the slightest idea what I was talking about there. [*Laughter*]

You know, a lot of times on the campaign, they asked me about economics, and I actually said this. "More and more of our imports come from overseas." [*Laughter*]

Now, most people would say this when they're talking about the economy: "We ought to make the pie bigger." [*Laughter*] However, I said this. [*Laughter*] "We ought to make the pie higher." [*Laughter*] It is a very complicated economic point I was making there. [*Laughter*] But believe me—believe me, what this country needs is taller pie. [*Laughter*]

And how about this for a foreign policy vision: "When I was coming up, it was a dangerous world. And we knew exactly who the 'they' were." [*Laughter*] "It was 'us' versus 'them.'" [*Laughter*] "And it was clear who the 'them' was." [*Laughter*] "Today, we're not so sure who the 'they' are"—[*laughter*]—"but we know they're there." John Ashcroft, by the way, attributes the way I talk to my religious fervor. In fact, the first time we met, he thought I was talking in tongues. [*Laughter*]

Then there is my famous statement: "Rarely is the question asked, is our children learning?" [*Laughter*] Let's analyze that sentence for a moment. [*Laughter*] If you're a stickler, you probably think the singular verb "is" should have been the plural "are." But if you read it closely, you'll see that I'm using the intransitive plural subjective tense. [*Laughter*] And so the word "is" are correct. [*Laughter*]

Now, ladies and gentlemen, you have to admit, in my sentences, I go where no man has gone before. [*Laughter*] But the way I see it is, I am a boon to the English language. I've coined new words, like "misunderestimate" and "Hispanically." [*Laughter*] I've expanded the definition of words themselves, using "vulcanize" when I meant "polarize," "Grecians" when I meant "Greeks," "inebriating" when I meant "exhilarating." [*Laughter*] And instead of "barriers and tariffs," I said "terriers and bariffs." [*Laughter*]

We all make our contributions in the world, and I suppose mine will not be to the literary treasures of the Western civilization. [*Laughter*] But I do hope to contribute in my own way. And one of those ways is to bring closer the day when every child and every American learns to read. And that is why the budget I submitted to the United States Congress triples the

amount of money available for reading programs all across America.

I'm proud of Mother. She took up the cause more than a decade ago, and she didn't leave it behind in the White House. Through her efforts and the efforts of all who have helped the Barbara Bush Foundation, so many lives have been enriched with new opportunities.

We heard Norma Vargas beautifully describe the good that has come into her life since she has found the courage to walk into that San Jose classroom to begin her first lesson. Tens of thousands more have their own stories, stories of people finding new and better jobs and gaining a new sense of dignity because now they can read.

And I'm proud that Laura has her own commitment to education. She was a teacher when I met her. In her own way, she will always be a teacher. She's the best kind of teacher, too, the kind who leaves no one out and believes in the possibilities of every person.

That's the spirit of your cause and ours. I thank each of you for all you have contributed. It will be repaid many times over in lives of new achievement and lives of new hope.

Thank you, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:04 p.m. at the Wortham Theater Center. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of former President George Bush, former First Lady Barbara Bush, First Lady Laura Bush, and former Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom.

Remarks at the Dedication of the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum in Austin, Texas

April 27, 2001

Thank you, Governor; and thank you, Jan, very much for having Laura and me. We're sure glad to be home. I love my work; I really do. I love what I'm doing. But I've got to confess, I miss my friends in Texas, and it's good to see so many of my friends here today. It's also good to be here with members of the Bullock family and the many whose lives he touched.

Governor Perry, I appreciate the job you're doing here in Texas. Some of you may recall that I had mixed feelings about leaving the Governor's office, but it was easier knowing that I was leaving the State in pretty darn good hands. And when I decided to leave, I joined the former Governors club. I'm your newest member. But I see three of the members here today, Governors Briscoe, Smith, and Clements, and we're honored by your presence.

And representing the family of the 36th President is Lucy Baines Johnson. Laura and I live in your former home, and we look forward to the day we can welcome you and your lovely mom back to Washington.

It's good to be here with the Lieutenant Governor, and I congratulate him on his promotion. And of course, my friend the Speaker—it's great to see both Nelda and Pete; we miss you both a lot. I see a lot of other familiar faces here as well, members of the legislature—some of you smiling—[*laughter*]—some of those same old familiar scowls. [*Laughter*] And it's good to see a lot of other folks from back in the days when it seemed like everybody worked for Bob Bullock.

This is really a fine museum. Laura and I were honored to be able to tour it. It is magnificent. Everybody in Texas needs

to come and see it. And so I want to congratulate the members of the preservation board; Clay Johnson and Dealey Herndon and John Nau, who took the idea from paper to reality. They deserve a lot of credit for their vision.

In the years to come, visitors will take the tour we have just taken. They'll view the exhibits. They'll come upon the statue of the 38th Lieutenant Governor of Texas and see it just as the way we saw it today. With time passing, fewer visitors will know Bob Bullock as we knew him, and we're the lucky ones.

If you knew him, you were very much aware of this fact: He had a way of making himself clear. [*Laughter*] Nobody ever came out of a meeting with Bob Bullock thinking, "Gee, I wonder what's on his mind." [*Laughter*] As a result, many of us knew that Bob didn't want his name on this building. Well, that's just too darn bad. We have no choice but to overrule him. You see, to a great building like this, telling the story of Texas and standing right here in the center of our State's capital, the only name to give it was "Bob Bullock."

I can't help thinking how much he would have loved to hearing "Hail to the Chief" played here in Austin. Bob seemed to know my future before I did. He was among the first people who told me I was going to be the President, and like always, he made it sound like an order. [*Laughter*] His confidence meant a lot to me, and I've thought a lot about him when I've sat in the Oval Office.

Along with his predictions, I always got some advice from Bob. One of the last times we talked, he had just seen a picture of me on a magazine. He took the oxygen mask off and summoned up some strength in his frail body, and he said, "You need to smile more for the cameras." [*Laughter*] I seem to remember a few other occasions when Bob gave me advice, and I was always glad he did. Many of his words of advice can't be quoted here—[*laughter*]—really only meant for mature audiences. [*Laughter*]

We all remember Bob's gift for a colorful image and the fragrant phrase. But we remember the advice, too, because there was wisdom in it. He spoke with experience and with conviction and authority.

In 1994 people warned me about him before I even got to Austin. We were men of different backgrounds and of different political parties, both elected to high offices in our State. He was the one who had been around. I recognized that early. He had the kind of influence you don't get with a title. And no Governor, and certainly no new Governor, had anything to teach him about getting anything done.

We know how it turned out. We know there was a record of shared accomplishment and a record of shared credit, as well. Yet, it all could have worked out differently. It could have been much different. Had he chosen to, Bob—and for that matter, Pete Laney—could have prevented tax reform or legal reform or education reform. In the Constitution, I could stop legislation with a veto. In the capital, Bob Bullock could stop it with a phone call.

But when he exercised power, it was on principle. He was a Democrat and a loyal one. He was a politician and a skilled one. He was a competitor and a tough one. When I met Bob Bullock, he was set in his ways. Bob Bullock had decided on his priorities. He was an American, a Texan, and a Democrat, in that order. He decided things on merits. He took his responsibilities as seriously as his power, and that's what made him an essential ally, a great public servant, and a towering figure to all who knew him.

In Texas, we have a tradition of straight talk and fair dealing, and Bob Bullock embodied that. In the last 97 days, I've done my best to take the values I learned here in Texas to the debates in Washington. And there's a way yet to go, but I think we're making some progress. The tone is more

civil; the respect is more widespread. I think Bob Bullock would be pleased.

Something about politics in this State—in every generation, a figure comes along who just seems larger than life, and I'm sure they'll keep coming. But he was ours, Bob Bullock, and we'll always remember him. He's been called the last of a breed, and it's true that politics has changed. Let's just hope it doesn't change too much. We'll always need his kind of strength and toughness and shrewd wisdom. These were the outward qualities of a man who had more kindness and gentleness than he would ever admit. And that's why we miss him so much, not just because he was a character but because he was a charming, loving, and loyal friend.

Twenty-two months ago, we stood in the rain and said goodbye to Bob Bullock. Today, under a warm Texas sky, we're all here again to point with pride to a new building and the fine name upon it. It's a happy moment for us who knew him, a day to reunite, a day to offer thanks, and a day to smile for the cameras.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:25 p.m. outside the museum. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Rick Perry and former Governors Dolph Briscoe, Preston Smith, and William P. Clements, Jr., of Texas; Jan Bullock, widow of Bob Bullock; Lucy Baines Johnson, daughter of Lady Bird Johnson and President Lyndon B. Johnson; Lt. Gov. Bill Ratliff of Texas; Speaker of the Texas House of Representatives James E. "Pete" Laney and his wife, Nelda; and Clay Johnson, Dealey Herndon, and John Nau, members, Museum Advisory Committee.

The President's Radio Address
April 28, 2001

Good morning. You have probably seen the newspaper and television stories anticipating the 100th day of my administration. Ever since Franklin Roosevelt's time, the 100th day has been a media marker. But what we are marking is not 100 days of my Presidency; it is 100 days of Congress and the President working together for the American people.

What have we accomplished so far? I think we're making progress toward changing the tone in Washington. There's less name-calling and finger-pointing. We're sharing credit. We are learning we can make our points without making enemies. Bitterness and divisiveness in Washington poison the mood of the whole country. On the other hand, a culture of respect and results in Washington can change the mood of the country for the better.

We're also moving ahead with an important legislative agenda. There were some last summer who said there's no way anyone could possibly get a tax relief plan through the Congress. Yet the House and the Senate have now both endorsed significant tax relief and are headed toward a final vote.

Tax relief is an important principle. The Federal Government is taking more money than it needs out of the pockets of the people, and we need to return some. Yet tax relief is also an important part of our economic strategy. It will accelerate our economic growth and create more jobs and more opportunity. This has nothing to do with me or my political party. It has everything to do with what is right for the country.

The Senate committee responsible for education voted 20 to nothing in favor of

a solid education reform bill. And we'll see results, too, from our initiative to welcoming charities and faith-based organizations into the work of helping Americans in need. We're at work on a plan to increase America's energy supply in the long term. At the same time, we are acting in a commonsense way to defend our environment. We are adopting new, scientifically sensible rules to discourage emissions of lead, to protect wetlands, to reduce the amount of arsenic in drinking water, to curb dangerous pesticides, and to clean the air of pollution from onroad diesel engines.

Internationally, we are building a more peaceful and open world. Our relationship with China is maturing. There will be areas where we can agree, like trade, and areas where we won't agree—Taiwan, human rights, religious liberty. And where we disagree, I will speak frankly.

But it's just as important for us to listen as it is to speak. A week ago, I attended the Summit of the Americas in Quebec City, where I met with the democratically elected leaders of Canada, Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. We talked about how we can handle common challenges, everything from education and the environment to drugs, energy, and trade. I said my piece, and I listened, as well. That's how good neighbors behave.

In nearly 100 days, we have made a good start. But it's only a start. On a number of important issues, we have laid the foundation for progress. Now we need to turn a good start and good spirit into good laws. And I urge the Congress to join me in seizing the opportunities of the next 100 days and beyond.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10 a.m. on April 27 at the Bush Ranch in Crawford, TX, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 28. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 27 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks at the White House Correspondents' Association Dinner
April 28, 2001

Thank you, Arlene. Laura and I are delighted to be here with all the major leaguers. [*Laughter*] Tonight I've decided to do something a little different. See, my mother, over the years, has put together at least 70 scrapbooks about our life as a family. What I've done is pull out some of the actual, never-before-seen photos from these scrapbooks and create a little slide show. [*Laughter*] And so, Gordon, if everybody's cell phones are turned off—[*laughter*]—you can hit the lights.

Tonight I present a Bush family album. What you may not realize is that I grew up at a time in Texas history when it was still a rough and tumble frontier. [*Laughter*] We were ranchers back then. [*Laughter*] This was my favorite horse. He was sure-footed, steady. I trusted that horse totally. And here's the really weird part: His name was Dick Cheney. [*Laughter*]

But times were hard back then. [*Laughter*] This, of course, was during the great drought of 1953. [*Laughter*] Dad, Neil, Doro, Marvin, and Jeb—in my family, with all those kids in the tub, it's not arsenic in the water I'd be worried about. [*Laughter*] Personally, I've always preferred a private bath. [*Laughter*]

This is my actual first-grade report card. Up top, it says, "George W. Bush." And then notice the final grades on the right:

Writing, A; Reading, A; Spelling, A; Arithmetic, A; Music, A; Art, A. So my advice is, don't peak too early. [*Laughter*]

Here, I am with my fifth-grade science project. [*Laughter*] Built it myself. And it's still meeting our energy needs. [*Laughter*]

I went on to college and graduate school, but somehow, the press has gotten the wrong idea, that I was a smart aleck party guy. [*Laughter*] This is an unfair perception. See, in college, I actually did a lot of independent reading. [*Laughter*]

After graduation I joined the Texas Air National Guard. I'm the one who committed the State of Texas to defend Taiwan from attack. [*Laughter*]

Speaking of pilots, I'm so proud and honored to welcome to our Nation's Capital Lieutenant Shane Osborn and crewmember Lieutenant j.g. John Comerford. I hope you and your crew will be coming to the White House soon. I think you'll like it there. [*Laughter*] I know I've said this to you personally on the phone, but I'm proud to say it publicly: Welcome back, Lieutenant.

Some people wondered—and I'm sure there might have been a few out here—how I would handle the recent incident in China. Truth is, I have long been a serious student of the Orient. [*Laughter*] My mom and dad, of course, were in China when Dad was the U.S. liaison there. People have asked me, "Is it difficult trying to follow in the footsteps of a man who was President, Vice President, U.N. Ambassador, a man who held so many other important jobs? Is it hard being such a man's son?" Not really. [*Laughter*]

Most people don't realize it, but Dad has had some tough times. [*Laughter*] Back in the fifties, he went through a period where he thought aliens were trying to contact him. [*Laughter*] So he built this contraption to receive their signals. [*Laughter*]

As for my mom, after bearing six children she herself became a bit stressed. [*Laughter*] She took to acting very strangely. [*Laughter*] For a while, she thought she was too tall and walked like this. [*Laughter*] As if that weren't strange enough, next she wrote a book with that damn, mangy, ill-tempered dog. [*Laughter*] I hated that dog. [*Laughter*] My mother treated the dog better than she treated me. [*Laughter*] She never helped me write my book. [*Laughter*]

I will say this, however, my mom always stuck up for us kids. Here's Mom replying to a reporter's question about something Barbra Streisand said recently. [*Laughter*]

Fortunately, I've got great brothers and a great sister. Some people have asked me, however, if the vote recount left any hard feelings between my brother Jeb and me? Not a bit. In fact, here's a picture of the Governor of Florida. [*Laughter*]

All this brings me to a seriouser point. [*Laughter*] Eventually, I met a woman named Laura Welch. She changed my life. She has given me as an adult what I enjoyed as a child, and that is a loving family. The defining moments in the Bush family are not when my father was elected President or when I was elected President. The defining moments have been family moments. Ladies and gentlemen, I've been blessed with a family that is full of love, and I pray the same for you.

Good evening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:30 p.m. in the Ballroom at the Washington Hilton. In his remarks, he referred to his parents, former First Lady Barbara Bush and former President George Bush, brothers Neil Bush, Marvin Bush, and Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida, and sister, Dorothy Bush Koch; Arlene Dillon, president, White House Correspondents' Association; Assistant Press Secretary Gordon Johndroe; Lt. Shane Osborn, USN, and Lt. (jg.) John Comerford, USN, pilot and crewmember of the U.S. Navy EP–3E Aries II electronic surveillance aircraft held by the Government of China after the aircraft made an emergency landing on China's Hainan Island due to a mid-air collision with a Chinese F–8 fighter jet over the South China Sea on March 31; and entertainer Barbra Streisand.

Remarks at the First Hundred Days Congressional Luncheon
April 30, 2001

Thank you all. Thank you for coming. I appreciate you bringing such nice weather. It's good to see members of my Cabinet who are here. Mr. Secretary, thank you for being here.

Today marks our 100th day of working together for the American people. We've had some good debates. We've made some good progress, and it looks like we're going to pass some good law.

I've now met with most of you, and here's what I think: I think America is lucky to have such distinguished citizens coming to Washington to represent them. I've been impressed by the caliber of the person. I've been impressed by the conviction that you brought to the Oval Office.

Oh, I know we always don't agree. But we're beginning to get a spirit here in Washington where we're more agreeable, where we're setting a different tone. So when the good folks of this country look at our Nation's Capital, they see something they can be proud of.

I want to thank you all very much for your service to the country. I want to thank your families for the sacrifice they make. I also want to thank you for the constructive spirit in which we've conducted the people's business. I know this: That whatever your views on a particular issue are, that we share a common goal, and that is to serve our country. And it's okay sometimes to share a meal, and that's why we're here. [*Laughter*]

So I want to thank you for being here. If you will join me in the East Room, I think we've got some pretty good food for you.

Thanks for your service. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:45 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Statement on the Death of Richard M. Scammon
April 30, 2001

Richard Scammon was a groundbreaking analyst of American politics. He brought rigor and insight to the study of elections. And he studied elections because he loved democracy. All who share that passion will miss him.

Remarks at the National Defense University
May 1, 2001

Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary. I appreciate you being here. I also want to thank Secretary Powell for being here, as well. My National Security Adviser, Condi Rice, is here, as well as the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Myers. I appreciate Admiral Clark and General Ryan here—for being here, as well. But most of all, I want to thank you, Admiral Gaffney, and the students for NDU for having me here today.

For almost 100 years, this campus has served as one of our country's premier centers for learning and thinking about America's national security. Some of America's finest soldiers have studied here—Dwight Eisenhower and Colin Powell. Some of America's finest statesmen have taught here—George Kennan.

Today, you're carrying on this proud tradition forward, continuing to train tomorrow's generals, admirals, and other national security thinkers, and continuing to provide the intellectual capital for our Nation's strategic vision.

This afternoon I want us to think back some 30 years to a far different time in a far different world. The United States and the Soviet Union were locked in a hostile rivalry. The Soviet Union was our unquestioned enemy, a highly armed threat to freedom and democracy. Far more than that wall in Berlin divided us. Our highest ideal was—and remains—individual liberty; theirs was the construction of a vast Communist empire. Their totalitarian regime held much of Europe captive behind an Iron Curtain.

We didn't trust them, and for good reason. Our deep differences were expressed in a dangerous military confrontation that resulted in thousands of nuclear weapons pointed at each other on hair trigger alert. Security of both the United States and the Soviet Union was based on a grim premise that neither side would fire nuclear weapons at each other because doing so would mean the end of both nations.

We even went so far as to codify this relationship in a 1972 ABM Treaty, based on the doctrine that our very survival would best be ensured by leaving both sides completely open and vulnerable to nuclear attack. The threat was real and vivid. The Strategic Air Command had an airborne command post called the Looking Glass aloft 24 hours a day, ready in case the President ordered our strategic forces to move towards their targets and release their nuclear ordnance.

The Soviet Union had almost 1.5 million troops deep in the heart of Europe, in Poland and Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany. We used our nuclear weapons not just to prevent the Soviet Union from using their nuclear weapons but also to contain their conventional military forces, to prevent them from extending the Iron Curtain into parts of Europe and Asia that were still free.

In that world, few other nations had nuclear weapons, and most of those who did were responsible allies, such as Britain and France. We worried about the proliferation of nuclear weapons to other countries, but it was mostly a distant threat, not yet a reality.

Today, the Sun comes up on a vastly different world. The Wall is gone, and so is the Soviet Union. Today's Russia is not yesterday's Soviet Union. Its Government is no longer Communist. Its President is elected. Today's Russia is not our enemy but a country in transition with an opportunity to emerge as a great nation, democratic, at peace with itself and its neighbors. The Iron Curtain no longer exists. Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic are free nations, and they are now our Allies in NATO, together with a reunited Germany.

Yet, this is still a dangerous world, a less certain, a less predictable one. More nations have nuclear weapons, and still more have nuclear aspirations. Many have chemical and biological weapons. Some already have developed the ballistic missile technology that would allow them to deliver weapons of mass destruction at long distances and at incredible speeds. And a number of these countries are spreading these technologies around the world.

Most troubling of all, the list of these countries includes some of the world's least responsible states. Unlike the cold war, today's most urgent threat stems not from thousands of ballistic missiles in Soviet hands but from a small number of missiles in the hands of these states, states for whom terror and blackmail are a way of

life. They seek weapons of mass destruction to intimidate their neighbors and to keep the United States and other responsible nations from helping allies and friends in strategic parts of the world.

When Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1990, the world joined forces to turn him back. But the international community would have faced a very different situation had Hussein been able to blackmail with nuclear weapons. Like Saddam Hussein, some of today's tyrants are gripped by an implacable hatred of the United States of America. They hate our friends. They hate our values. They hate democracy and freedom and individual liberty. Many care little for the lives of their own people. In such a world, cold war deterrence is no longer enough.

To maintain peace, to protect our own citizens and our own allies and friends, we must seek security based on more than the grim premise that we can destroy those who seek to destroy us. This is an important opportunity for the world to rethink the unthinkable and to find new ways to keep the peace.

Today's world requires a new policy, a broad strategy of active nonproliferation, counterproliferation, and defenses. We must work together with other like-minded nations to deny weapons of terror from those seeking to acquire them. We must work with allies and friends who wish to join with us to defend against the harm they can inflict. And together we must deter anyone who would contemplate their use.

We need new concepts of deterrence that rely on both offensive and defensive forces. Deterrence can no longer be based solely on the threat of nuclear retaliation. Defenses can strengthen deterrence by reducing the incentive for proliferation.

We need a new framework that allows us to build missile defenses to counter the different threats of today's world. To do so, we must move beyond the constraints of the 30-year-old ABM Treaty. This Treaty does not recognize the present or point us to the future; it enshrines the past. No treaty that prevents us from addressing today's threats, that prohibits us from pursuing promising technology to defend ourselves, our friends, and our allies is in our interests or in the interests of world peace.

This new framework must encourage still further cuts in nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons still have a vital role to play in our security and that of our allies. We can and will change the size, the composition, the character of our nuclear forces in a way that reflects the reality that the cold war is over.

I am committed to achieving a credible deterrent with the lowest possible number of nuclear weapons consistent with our national security needs, including our obligations to our allies. My goal is to move quickly to reduce nuclear forces. The United States will lead by example to achieve our interests and the interests for peace in the world.

Several months ago, I asked Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld to examine all available technologies and basing modes for effective missile defenses that could protect the United States, our deployed forces, our friends, and our allies. The Secretary has explored a number of complementary and innovative approaches.

The Secretary has identified near-term options that could allow us to deploy an initial capability against limited threats. In some cases, we can draw on already established technologies that might involve land-based and sea-based capabilities to intercept missiles in midcourse or after they reenter the atmosphere. We also recognize the substantial advantages of intercepting missiles early in their flight, especially in the boost phase.

The preliminary work has produced some promising options for advanced sensors and interceptors that may provide this capability. If based at sea or on aircraft, such approaches could provide limited but effective defenses.

We have more work to do to determine the final form the defenses might take. We will explore all these options further. We recognize the technological difficulties we face, and we look forward to the challenge. Our Nation will assign the best people to this critical task. We will evaluate what works and what does not. We know that some approaches will not work. We also know that we will be able to build on our successes. When ready, and working with Congress, we will deploy missile defenses to strengthen global security and stability.

I've made it clear from the very beginning that I would consult closely on any important subject with our friends and allies who are also threatened by missiles and weapons of mass destruction. Today I'm announcing the dispatch of high-level representatives to allied capitals in Europe, Asia, Australia, and Canada to discuss our common responsibility to create a new framework for security and stability that reflects the world of today. They will begin leaving next week.

The delegations will be headed by three men on this stage, Rich Armitage, Paul Wolfowitz, and Steve Hadley, Deputies of the State Department, the Defense Department, and the National Security staff. Their trips will be part of an ongoing process of consultation involving many people and many levels of government, including my Cabinet Secretaries.

These will be real consultations. We are not presenting our friends and allies with unilateral decisions already made. We look forward to hearing their views, the views of our friends, and to take them into account. We will seek their input on all the issues surrounding the new strategic environment.

We'll also need to reach out to other interested states, including China and Russia. Russia and the United States should work together to develop a new foundation for world peace and security in the 21st century. We should leave behind the constraints of an ABM Treaty that perpetuates a relationship based on distrust and mutual vulnerability. This Treaty ignores the fundamental breakthroughs in technology during the last 30 years. It prohibits us from exploring all options for defending against the threats that face us, our allies, and other countries.

That's why we should work together to replace this Treaty with a new framework that reflects a clear and clean break from the past and especially from the adversarial legacy of the cold war. This new cooperative relationship should look to the future, not to the past. It should be reassuring rather than threatening. It should be premised on openness, mutual confidence, and real opportunities for cooperation, including the area of missile defense. It should allow us to share information so that each nation can improve its early warning capability and its capability to defend its people and territory. And perhaps one day, we can even cooperate in a joint defense.

I want to complete the work of changing our relationship from one based on a nuclear balance of terror to one based on common responsibilities and common interests. We may have areas of difference with Russia, but we are not and must not be strategic adversaries. Russia and America both face new threats to security. Together, we can address today's threats and pursue today's opportunities. We can explore technologies that have the potential to make us all safer.

This is a time for vision, a time for a new way of thinking, a time for bold leadership. The Looking Glass no longer stands its 24-hour-a-day vigil. We must all look at the world in a new, realistic way to preserve peace for generations to come.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:40 p.m. outside Eisenhower Hall at Fort McNair. In his remarks, he referred to Vice Adm. Paul G. Gaffney II, USN, president, National Defense University; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Remarks on the Bipartisan Congressional Tax Relief Agreement and an Exchange With Reporters
May 1, 2001

The President. Good afternoon. This is a great day for the American people and the American taxpayer. Working together, Republicans and Democrats in the House and the Senate have agreed on a proposal that will provide $1.35 trillion in tax relief over the next 11 years. One hundred billion will be distributed right away, this year and next, to help stimulate our economy and put money in people's pockets quickly. The rest of tax relief will be provided over the next decade.

I congratulate the Members of the Senate and the House, Republicans and Democrats, who have worked so hard to achieve this bipartisan agreement. You all deserve great credit for agreeing to provide the American people with meaningful, significant, sweeping tax relief, the most tax relief in a generation.

Today Republicans and Democrats have agreed to help Americans send their children to college, pay off their mortgages a little faster, or cope with rising energy costs. In short, once we've funded our Nation's priorities, we've agreed to let the American people spend their own money on their own priorities.

Today's agreement has a larger message, as well. By finding common ground on an issue that divided the two parties throughout last year's campaign, Republicans and Democrats have today proven we can work together to do what is right for the American people. Achieving the agreement on significant tax relief can help pave the way for consensus on other vital issues, including reforming our public schools, strengthening Social Security and Medicare, and transforming our national defense.

When I spoke to a joint session of Congress just a few months ago to outline my budget and tax relief proposals, I said that in the end we'll be judged not only by what we say but by what we're able to accomplish. We have more work to do to complete the full budget. But today we have accomplished significant tax relief and shown we can work together in a constructive way to get things done for the people of this country.

Thank you.

Federal Budget

Q. Mr. President, are you going to be able to keep spending in check in order to be able to fund your tax cuts?

The President. Well, I'm absolutely convinced we'll be able to fund the tax cuts.

Q. Are you going to be able to keep spending——

The President. I've worked with Members of the House and the Senate to have a discretionary spending at a reasonable level. I hope—we're making progress. There's a lot of discussions going on. I suspect I'm going to have to remain diligent over the next year to keep the spenders in check. That's a good job for the Chief Executive Officer.

Conversation With President Vladimir Putin of Russia

Q. Mr. President, how did your conversation with President Putin go?

The President. Terry [Terry Moran, ABC News], it was good. We had a very constructive conversation. I called him early this morning to let him know that I'd be giving the speech that I just gave. I wanted to assure him that my plans were in the best interests of our two countries, that we are going to consult with the Russians, as well as our other friends and allies.

But I also made it clear to him that it's important to think beyond the old days of when we had the concept that if we blew each other up, the world would be

safe. I told him the cold war is over and that Russia was not our enemy, and I'd help try to define the threats as realistically as I could and that we needed to have defenses to meet those threats. I also told him that we would work to reduce our own nuclear arsenals and would do so in time.

He asked me whether or not there is a chance we could meet before our upcoming summits. I told him I would love to meet with him beforehand, to look him in the eye and let him know how sincere I am about achieving a new way of keeping the peace.

He reminded me at one point in time that he talked about the need to address current threats in our world with systems that might be able to intercept missiles on launch—boost phase—I talked about today. So I felt that it was a very constructive meeting.

Resignation of FBI Director

Q. Mr. President, are you concerned about Director Freeh's resignation? Did that catch you by surprise?

The President. Actually, Director Freeh came to see me late yesterday afternoon, and he asked if we could meet alone. I said, "Of course." And he said, "I'm resigning." And it did catch me by surprise. And I'm disappointed. I would hope—I was hoping that he would stay on. I think he's done a very good job. I'm sure he explained to you—I didn't see his press conference, but I suspect he explained to you the reason why, and that is, he wanted to spend more time with his family. I found Louie Freeh to be a fine public servant, and our Nation owes him a great debt of gratitude for his service to our country. And now we'll begin the process of finding replacements.

National Missile Defense

Q. What response do you expect from the European allies on missile defense? Do you think they will get along—go along eventually, and will participate?

The President. Well, I think we've got a lot of explaining to do. That's why yesterday I called the leaders of France and Britain and Canada and Germany to explain to them exactly what I—and the head of the NATO—to explain to them exactly what I just explained—I told you, that—Mr. Putin. The phone call I made yesterday was nothing new, however. I had met with those leaders before and talked to them about what I meant.

And during the course of the campaign, when I talked about providing defenses to meet the true threats of—that all of us are now faced with, the leaders were pleased that we're sincere about our desire to go through consultations. I've sent a high-level team—a team of high-level members of my administration, Deputies Armitage, Hadley, and Wolfowitz. It's a clear signal about how, one, important this issue is and how, two, how seriously we take the idea of consulting with our allies and friends. They are very pleased with that.

But they are going to have to speak for themselves. I am a little hesitant to put words in their mouth.

Social Security Reform

Q. Mr. President, on the Social Security Commission, some are saying that if the membership is going to be sort of stacked in a way that preordains a recommendation of privatization. What is your——

The President. Well, I think—I think—let us—tomorrow is a day when we will be talking about Social Security, and that would be a very good question to the members of the Commission, to make sure that there is an objective analysis of Social Security: How do we save it; what do we do to make sure it is viable in the future? There is a lot of speculation about the Commission that will be cleared up tomorrow afternoon, if I'm not mistaken, right here in this very spot.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:05 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Jacques Chirac of France; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada; Chancellor Gerhardt Schroeder of Germany; and NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson.

Statement on the Retirement of Federal Bureau of Investigation Director Louis J. Freeh
May 1, 2001

Louis Freeh is a dedicated public servant who has served his country and the FBI with honor and distinction. I regret the Director is leaving Government. We are fortunate to have had a man of his caliber serve our country, and we will miss him.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Proposed Legislation To Extend the Filing Deadline for Undocumented Immigrants
May 1, 2001

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Leader:)

I am a strong proponent of government policies that recognize the importance of families and that help to strengthen them. To the extent possible, I believe that our immigration policies should reflect that philosophy. That is why I support legislation to extend the window created under section 245(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act during which qualified immigrants may obtain legal residence in the United States without being forced to first leave the country and their families for several years.

According to agency estimates, there are more than 500,000 undocumented immigrants in the country who are eligible to become legal permanent residents, primarily because of their family relationship with a citizen or legal permanent resident. However, the law generally requires them to go back to their home country to obtain a visa, and once they do so, they are barred from returning to the United States for up to 10 years. Many choose to risk remaining here illegally rather than to be separated from their families for those many years. This issue has been the subject of discussion in the Working Group that Attorney General Ashcroft and Secretary of State Powell co-chair with officials of the Mexican government, and should be addressed to ensure a more orderly, legal, and humane migration flow between our countries.

I encourage the Congress to consider whether there was adequate time for persons eligible under section 245(i) to apply for adjustment of status before the filing deadline expired yesterday. Information indicates an estimated 200,000 were eligible to file but did not meet the deadline. Preliminary reports suggest that many applicants were unable to complete their paperwork in time, due in part to the fact that the rules explaining how the provision would be applied were not issued until late March. It remains in our national interest to legitimize those resident immigrants, eligible for legal status, and to welcome them as full participants of our society. But we

will only be able to do this if the path to legalization encourages family reunification. For this reason, I would support legislation that temporarily extends the recently expired April 30, 2001, filing deadline, while maintaining the requirement that the applicant was physically present in the United States on December 21, 2000.

I look forward to working with you on this important legislation.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader; Trent Lott, Senate majority leader; and Thomas A. Daschle, Senate minority leader.

Remarks on Establishing the President's Commission To Strengthen Social Security
May 2, 2001

The President. Please be seated. Mr. Secretary, thank you for coming. Members of the newly formed Social Security Commission, I want to thank you all for being here. And I want to thank your family members who are here, as well.

Social Security is one of the greatest achievements of the American Government and one of the deepest commitments to the American people. For more than six decades, it has protected our elderly against poverty and assured young people of a more secure future. It must continue to do this important work for decades to come.

Yet, it has been apparent for many years that Social Security, itself, is becoming insecure. Social Security was designed for an era when few Americans lived much past the age of 65 and when families of three or four children were more than the exception. When Social Security was created, there was about 40 workers paying Social Security taxes for every one retiree receiving benefits. Today, there are three workers for every retiree; soon, there will be two. Long life is a blessing. Smaller families are an individual choice. But the consequence of this blessing and this choice is that the Social Security payroll tax, which was once 2 percent, has now passed 12 percent. Economists calculate that it will have to rise past 18 percent if the baby boomers are to receive the same benefits that Social Security has promised, unless we take steps soon to reform the way Social Security is financed.

The threat to the stability of Social Security has been apparent for decades. For years, political leaders have agreed that something must be done, but nothing has been done. We can postpone action no longer. Social Security is a challenge now. If we fail to act, it will become a crisis. We must save Social Security, and we now have the opportunity to do so. Our Government will run large budget surpluses over the next 10 years. These surpluses provide an opportunity to move to a stronger Social Security system.

Two months ago, in my address to Congress, I described the principles that must guide any reform of Social Security. First, Social Security reform must preserve the benefits of all current retirees and those nearing retirement. Second, Social Security reform must return the Social Security system to sound financial footing. Third, Social Security reform must offer personal savings accounts to younger workers who want them. Today, young workers who pay into Social Security might as well be saving their

money in their mattresses. That's how low the return is on their contributions. And the return will only decline further—maybe even below zero—if we do not proceed with reform.

Personal savings accounts will transform Social Security from a Government IOU into personal property and real assets, property that workers will own in their own names and that they can pass along to their children. Ownership, independence, access to wealth should not be the privilege of a few; they're the hope of every American, and we must make them the foundation of Social Security.

Today I am naming a Presidential Commission to turn these principles into concrete reforms. This task is not easy, but the mandate is clear: Strengthen Social Security and make its promise more certain and valuable for generations to come. I have asked the Commission to deliver its report later this fall.

Social Security does not belong to any one political party, so the Commission is drawn from both parties. Social Security does not belong to the Government or to the politicians, and so my Commission has members from many different walks of life. It will be chaired by two outstanding Americans: Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Richard Parsons of AOL/Time Warner.

Senator Moynihan has been aptly described as the Nation's best thinker among politicians since Lincoln and its best politician among thinkers since Jefferson. A profound mind, a compassionate heart, and a farseeing imagination have distinguished him throughout his career.

Our task today is to preserve what is the best in Social Security while updating it, and for a new time. And nobody will do that job better than this great student of Social Security's history and stalwart champion of Social Security's principles.

As cochief operating officer of AOL/Time Warner, Richard Parsons is one of the leaders of this Nation's information age economy. Few people have served more tours of duty in the American Government and business—a senior aide in the Ford administration, managing partner of a distinguished law firm, CEO of a major savings bank, before becoming president of Time Warner.

Mr. Parsons serves his community as ably as he's served his country. He chairs the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone Development Corporation, where he mobilized the creativity of the private sector to bring jobs and opportunity to people in need. And he sits on the boards of Howard University and the Lincoln Center. Richard Parsons represents in our time the spirit of business statesmanship at its highest.

Fourteen other fine Americans have joined the Moynihan-Parsons commission; seven of them are Republicans, and seven are Democrats. They include a former aide to Robert Kennedy and a former aide to Ronald Reagan, political leaders, entrepreneurs, eminent experts on the Social Security system. Every one of these fine men and women is passionately committed to the safety, success, and long-term security of Social Security.

I'm giving this Commission a great task, and its members have my full faith. When it makes its report, the Congress and I will face some serious decisions, but we must be inspired by the example of the founder of Social Security, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. In his Fireside Chat of September 1934, shortly before Congress enacted Social Security, he warned that there will always be those "frightened by boldness and cowed by the necessity for making decisions." They will complain, he said, "that all we have done is unnecessary and subject to great risks."

But now, as then, bold action and serious decisions are necessary, and we in our time must rededicate ourselves to the great ideal Roosevelt defined 67 years ago: greater freedom and greater security for the average man than he has ever known before in the history of America. That's our charge, and we must keep it.

And now, one of the Cochairmen of this Commission, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan.

[*At this point, former Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Richard D. Parsons made brief remarks.*]

The President. I now have the honor of signing the Commission into being.

[*The President signed the Executive order.*]

The President. Thank you all very much. Thanks for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:27 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. The Executive order of May 2 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the President's Commission To Strengthen Social Security
May 2, 2001

Dear Senator Daschle and Congressman Gephardt:

Thank you for your letter of April 12, providing your recommendations concerning the creation of a Social Security commission.

I have pledged that I will work to develop a bipartisan consensus to strengthen Social Security, preserving the program for senior Americans and building wealth for younger Americans. I believe that a bipartisan commission will provide the renewed energy and focus that can help us transform our common commitment to strengthening Social Security into legislative action on behalf of Americans of all ages.

In your letter, you expressed support for some of the principles that I have outlined as cornerstones for any reform of Social Security. Like you, I believe that we must honor our commitment to pay full promised benefits to those who have made a lifetime of contributions to the Social Security program. I also believe that Social Security surpluses must be dedicated to Social Security only.

I was pleased to see that you do not oppose personal accounts, even while acknowledging legitimate differences regarding their appropriate structure and financing. Please be assured that the commission will consider a full and fair analysis of all methods of designing and financing such accounts.

I share your desire that the commission be truly bipartisan. It is my intention that the commission be composed of an equal number of Republicans and Democrats, and that the commission make use of the nonpartisan and independent projections embodied in the Social Security Trustees' reports.

As you note, it has been nearly two decades since the last significant legislation to shore up Social Security's finances. Too frequently in recent years, commissions and advisory councils have been constructed in a way that reproduced legislative gridlock. Such structures frustrated needed action to strengthen the programs on which Americans depend. It is not a coincidence that the last commission to have contributed significant legislation, the Greenspan Commission of 1981–83, was not handicapped by restrictive voting and approval procedures.

The best way to ensure that the commission receives the necessary internal and external approval is for both the President and the Congressional leadership to provide our support for the development of its recommendations. Those Americans who depend on Social Security today, as well as those who will depend on it in the future, deserve no less from us.

Thank you for your views. I look forward to working with you in the months to come.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader, and Thomas A. Daschle, Senate minority leader.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Congressional Leaders
May 2, 2001

Budget Agreement

It's my honor to welcome back to the Cabinet Room leaders in the House and the Senate, both Republicans and Democrats, who worked hard on the budget. There is a budget deal; it's an agreement that makes a lot of sense. In the agreement is the largest tax cut in a generation and reasonable levels of spending.

This plan could not have been done without the leadership of the Speaker and the leader of the Senate, nor could it have been done without two really fine budget chairmen, Congressman Nussle and Senator Domenici, both of whom and their staffs and their committees worked long, hard hours.

And finally, it couldn't have been done without the cooperation and work of some of our Democrat friends, Breaux in Louisiana and Miller of Georgia, Condit of California, Members around this table, who realized that it's time—it was time to come together to put a good budget together on behalf of the American people; Members who realize that what we're talking about is not partisan politics but good budget politics, good budget policy. They'll always recognize that we're here to serve the people, and this is the people's budget. It's a good budget for the working people of America, and I'm proud to congratulate you all for a job really well done.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:10 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the District of Columbia Courts Fiscal Year 2002 Budget Request
May 2, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the District of Columbia Code, as amended, I am transmitting the District of Columbia Courts FY 2002 Budget Submission.

The District of Columbia Courts have submitted a FY 2002 budget request for $111.7 million for operating expenses, $41.4 million for capital improvements to courthouse facilities, and $39.7 million for Defender Services in the District of Columbia Courts. My FY 2002 budget includes recommended funding levels of $105.2 million for operations, $6.0 million for capital improvements, and $34.3 million for Defender Services. My transmittal of the District of Columbia Courts' budget request does not represent an endorsement of its contents.

I look forward to working with the Congress throughout the FY 2002 appropriations process.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,

May 2, 2001.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Sudan
May 2, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Sudan that was declared in Executive Order 13067 of November 3, 1997.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
May 2, 2001.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Implementation of the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption
May 2, 2001

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

Pursuant to the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption adopted by the Senate on July 27, 2000, the President must submit to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations an annual implementation report each year for a 5-year period. Attached is the first such report.

As this report illustrates, countries throughout our hemisphere have taken important steps through legislative and executive actions to implement the Convention. These actions are indications of the realization that corruption threatens political and economic stability and undermines democracy. This report also outlines the steps taken to establish an evaluation mechanism—known as the Committee of Experts—to oversee implementation of the Convention.

I look forward to working with the Congress to ensure that we continue to combat corruption in our hemisphere and across the globe.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 3.

Remarks on the California Energy Shortage and an Exchange With Reporters
May 3, 2001

The President. I want to thank you all for coming today. I've assembled a team within my administration, in particular, the Secretary of Energy, as well as the Deputy Secretary of Defense, to discuss energy.

As the country knows, we're in the process of developing a comprehensive energy plan that will work to increase supplies, as well as encourage conservation. This is a long-run solution to the energy problems we now face.

This administration is deeply concerned about California and its citizens. We're worried about blackouts that may occur this summer, and we want to be a part of any solutions. Since I became sworn in, we've been working with the State of California to provide regulatory relief to encourage an increase in the amount of supplies available for the consumers in that State.

Today I am instructing all agencies, Federal agencies, to reduce their peak hour electricity use in the State of California. And the Secretary of Energy will be traveling to the State today to consult with the Governor of the State of California, as well as work with our respective agencies in that State.

Secondly, I am pleased to report that the Secretary of Defense, after a careful review, believes that this Department, which has got a large presence in the State of California, can reduce peak hour usage by 10 percent and can do so without harming military readiness.

We're also—and the Secretary is going to make it clear to the officials in the State of California that should Governor Davis, or any other Governor, for that matter, request power generating units owned by the Federal Government, they'll be available to help in the case of an emergency.

As well, FEMA, under Joe Allbaugh, is developing plans to help States that do face blackouts, to make sure the citizenry doesn't get harmed in any way.

This is a serious situation in the State of California. And as I said from the very beginning of my administration, we'll work to help California in any way we can. And the best way we can is to be good citizens. So I want to appreciate very much, Mr. Secretary, all your work, and I know you'd like to say a few words.

[*At this point, Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham made brief remarks.*]

The President. And we have with us Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz.

[*Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz made brief remarks.*]

Government Energy Policy Review

Q. Mr. President, are you asking Federal agencies nationwide to cut back? And what will the White House do?

The President. Well, I think we ought to ask all agencies to review energy policy. We're focused right now on California because that's a State that's going to suffer blackouts. But we've always got to be mindful of being energy efficient.

And since I've asked other agencies to review their policy, I'm going to ask the White House to do the same. Chief of Staff Andy Card has done just that today. We want to be good, efficient users of energy here in the White House.

Stretch [Richard Keil, Bloomberg Radio].

Energy Conservation

Q. Mr. President, your energy team is preparing a long-term report, and the Vice President earlier this week gave a speech in Toronto that really, frankly, gave short shrift to the concept of conservation and concentrated instead on exploration, finding

new ways to get natural gas pipelines built. Will conservation be a primary focus of the long-term plan, or is this really just something that's for the here and now and the short term in California?

The President. Oh, I think conservation has got to be an integral part of making sure we've got a reasonable energy policy. But what the Vice President was saying is, we can't conserve our way to energy independence, nor can we conserve our way to having enough energy available. So we've got to do both. We must conserve, but we've also got to find new sources of energy.

I haven't seen the final report yet, but I suspect the American people will find a balanced approach. But what people need to hear, loud and clear, is that we're running out of energy in America. And it is so important for this Nation to improve its infrastructure so we can not only deliver supplies, but we need to go find new supply. And I strongly believe we can do so in an environmentally friendly way.

This Nation is confronted with a major problem. And this administration is going to be honest with the American people about the nature of the problem, and we're going to come up with some solutions. And it's going to take a lot of political will for people to buck some of the trends that somehow believe—who believe that without finding additional supplies of energy, this Nation is going to be okay.

Q. If I could follow up, sir? Will there be a more prominent role for nuclear power, as part of your plan?

The President. You must wait until the report comes out, because I'm going to have to, too, until I see the final copy. But I would suggest that what this Nation needs to do is review all options.

John [John Cochran, ABC News].

Q. Sir, the Vice President seemed to be saying on Monday that Americans were already pretty energy efficient, so there's not much to be gained by conservation. Do you agree with that?

The President. Well, I agree that we've made great strides in energy efficiency; home building materials are more efficient. But we just found a place where we can reduce energy during peak hours by 10 percent. We must continue to find.

But what the Vice President and I understand is that you cannot conserve your way to energy independence. We can do a better job in conservation, but we darn sure have to do a better job of finding more supply. It is naive for the American people and its—and those who purport to speak for the American people, some of those, to say that we can be okay from an energy perspective by only focusing on conservation. We've got to find additional supplies of energy.

One thing this administration will do is, we're going to do our part when it comes to conservation in the State of California. But we will be honest with the American people. And the American people need to have an honest assessment of the issues this country faces, not only short term but long term. And that's exactly what the Vice President was saying the other day in Canada. And this report will be that way.

Steve, [Steve Holland, Reuters] final question.

China-U.S. Relations

Q. Sir, on the China policy, could you—could I ask you to explain what happened yesterday with the Rumsfeld order, and what will it take now to have military-to-military exchanges with the Chinese?

The President. In terms of what they call the ticktock, you need to talk to the folks at the Defense Department. But what the Secretary was rightly doing was saying that we're going to review all opportunities to interface with the Chinese. And if it enhances our relationship, it might make sense. If it's a useless exercise and it doesn't make the relationship any better, then we won't do that. But each opportunity will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. That makes sense. We've only been

in office for 104 days. We've got to review all policy that we inherited.

But what the Chinese must understand is that we'll be firm in our philosophy, consistent in our beliefs, and we want to work to have a relationship that is a positive relationship for both countries.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres of Israel

Q. Do you feel better after seeing Foreign Minister Peres this morning?

The President. Had a good visit with him.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—better after talking to him?

The President. Well, he's an optimistic person. And I was so pleased that Mr. Peres came by. I don't know what his statements were like to the press, but he leaves knowing full well this administration is actively engaged at, first and foremost, trying to break the cycle of terrorism that grips that part of the world.

But he gave me a very good assessment of how he viewed the world. And he's always been an optimistic person, so I do feel better having talked to him. He's a fine statesman, as well.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:55 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House following a meeting with energy advisers. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Gray Davis of California. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Memorandum on Energy Conservation at Federal Facilities
May 3, 2001

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Energy Conservation at Federal Facilities

A key component of my Administration's overall commitment to make the most economical use of public dollars and to protect the environment is to improve energy conservation at Federal facilities. Further, with possible electricity shortages in California and in the Northeast and Northwest this summer, the Federal Government should set a good example of conservation by reducing its own energy use, particularly in regions where electricity shortages may occur and during periods of peak electricity demand. Such conservation would save public money, protect the environment, and help to minimize shortages.

Therefore, I hereby direct the heads of executive departments and agencies (agencies) to take appropriate actions to conserve energy use at their facilities to the maximum extent consistent with the effective discharge of public responsibilities. Agencies located in regions where electricity shortages are possible should conserve especially during periods of peak demand.

In addition, agencies should review their existing operating and administrative processes and conservation programs and identify and implement ways to reduce such use. Agencies should report to me, through the Secretary of Energy, within 30 days from the date of this memorandum on the conservation actions taken. The agencies shall take these and other appropriate energy conservation actions using existing budget authority.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Remarks at a National Day of Prayer Reception
May 3, 2001

Thank you, all. Thank you and welcome to the White House. It's great to see members of my Cabinet here. Secretaries Veneman, Martinez, and Paige, thank you all for coming. Leaders of the United States Congress, thank you all for being here, as well.

Shirley, thank you for the State proclamations. I quickly thumbed through to make sure that Florida was there. [*Laughter*] Otherwise, my little brother might be hearing from me. [*Laughter*] But it was there. And thanks for the beautiful painting. We know how much work it takes to organize the National Day of Prayer, and all of us thank you for your hard work. You've done a very good job.

Wintley, thank you very much for sharing your voice with us. This is the second time I've been privileged to hear your voice since I've been the President. I hope to hear it a lot more. And Angela, it's wonderful to see you again. Thank you for your testimony and your beauty and your grace.

And Reverend Rogers, thank you so much for bringing not only your own words of prayer but that of our mutual friend Billy Graham, for whom we continue to pray for his health.

This is a day when our Nation recognizes a power above our power and influence beyond our influence, a guiding wisdom far greater than our own. The American character, it's strong and confident, but we have never been reluctant to speak of our own dependence on providence.

Our country was founded by great and wise people who were fluent in the language of humility, praise, and petition. Throughout our history, in danger and division, we have always turned to prayer. And our country has been delivered from many serious evils and wrongs because of that prayer.

We cannot presume to know every design of our Creator, or to assert a special claim on His favor. Yet, it is important to pause and recognize our help in ages past and our hope for years to come.

The first President to live in the White House arrived with a prayer. In a letter to his wife written on his second night here, John Adams offered a prayer that Heaven might bless this house and all those who would call it home. One of his successors, Franklin D. Roosevelt, thought enough of that prayer to have it inscribed on a mantelpiece in the State Dining Room, where you can still find it today.

In this house I make many decisions. But as I do so, as I make those decisions, I know as surely as you said that many Americans lift me up in prayer, those prayers are a gracious gift, and Laura and I and my family greatly appreciate them.

America has many traditions of faith and many experiences of prayer. But I suspect that many who pray have something in common: that we may pray for God's help, but as we do so, we find that God has changed our deepest selves. We learn humility before His will and acceptance of things beyond our understanding. We discover that the most sincere of all prayers can be the simple words, "Thy will be done." And that is a comfort more powerful than all our plans.

Laura and I really appreciate you being here on this special day. We thank you for your concerns for your country and your love of the Lord. It's an honor for me to be here, and I would ask that you join me in the State Dining Room for a little fellowship.

God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:48 p.m. on the State Floor at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Shirley Dobson,

chair, National Day of Prayer Task Force; Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; gospel singer Wintley Phipps; Angela Perez Baraquio, Miss America; Rev. Adrian Rogers, pastor, Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, TN; and evangelist Rev. Billy Graham. The National Day of Prayer proclamation of April 27 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks to the American Jewish Committee
May 3, 2001

Well, Bruce, thank you very much for that kind invitation. I'm glad I came, and I'm proud to call you friend.

I appreciate, David Harris, your eloquence. I want to say welcome to the foreign dignitaries who are here, Members of the Congress, Justice O'Connor, my friend Mayor Williams. And I'm proud to be here tonight with such close friends of America: *Mi amigo, un hombre muy fuerte, muy inteligente, el Presidente de Mexico,* Vicente Fox; Foreign Minister Fischer; and Foreign Minister Peres.

I had the honor of meeting with Foreign Minister Peres today in the Oval Office. It is not the first time we have met. He had a sparkle in his eye some 12 years ago when we met; he still has this marvelous sparkle in his eye. I love his optimism. As Bruce mentioned, he said, "When you talk to Shimon Peres, you feel like you're talking to a poet; you know you're talking to a leader." He's been a good friend of the United States throughout his many years of public service, and I look forward to showing him my friendship for the state of Israel over the coming years.

And Mr. Fischer, welcome to Washington. Please take back my best regards to your Chancellor; I had a great visit with him, as well, in the Oval Office.

And Mr. President, thank you for coming by. He also was in the Oval Office. I had a pretty busy day. [*Laughter*] This is the third time I've met with President Fox, and it's right that it be that way because relations with Mexico and the United States are incredibly important for our future. We want our friend to the south to be strong and vibrant. A strong Mexico, a healthy Mexico is good for the United States of America.

The four of us don't always agree; we occasionally have our differences. But one thing, obviously, we all agree on is when Bruce Ramer invites us somewhere, we go. [*Laughter*]

I took a look at this weekend's program before coming here. I was flattered to read that "understanding the new administration" is called a "central feature" of this year's meeting. Well, I may be able to save you some time. [*Laughter*]

I believe in equal opportunity for all without discrimination or prejudice of any kind. I believe that tolerance and respect must be taught to all our children because too many young minds and souls are lost to hate. I believe that our Government should support the works of charity that are motivated by faith, but our Government should never fund the teaching of faith itself.

I am a Christian, but I believe with the Psalmist that the Lord God of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps. Understanding my administration should not be difficult. We will speak up for our principles. We will stand up for our friends in the world, and one of the most important friends is the state of Israel.

Incredibly enough, when I visited Israel 2 years ago, I had the honor of touring many parts of that land in a helicopter with

Ariel Sharon. I'm pretty confident he didn't think I was going to be the President. [*Laughter*] The truth is, I wasn't sure he was going to be the Prime Minister. [*Laughter*] But nevertheless, here we are. I look forward to working with the Prime Minister. As Foreign Minister Peres told me today—and I agree—he's a man who knows how to keep his word, and that's important when it comes to foreign diplomacy.

For a Texan, a first visit to Israel is an eye opener. At the narrowest point, it's only 8 miles from the Mediterranean to the old armistice line. That's less than from the top to the bottom of Dallas-Fort Worth Airport. [*Laughter*] The whole of pre-1967 Israel is only about 6 times the size of the King Ranch. It's a small country that has lived under the threat throughout its existence.

At my first meeting of my National Security Council, I told them that a top foreign policy priority of my administration is the safety and security of Israel. My administration will be steadfast in supporting Israel against terrorism and violence and in seeking the peace for which all Israelis pray.

The Middle East is the birthplace of three great religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Lasting peace in the region must respect the rights of believers in all these faiths. That's common sense. But it is also something more: It is moral sense, based upon the deep American commitment to freedom of religion.

That commitment was expressed early and eloquently by our first President, George Washington, in his famous letter to the Touro Synagogue in Newport, Rhode Island. He argued for an attitude beyond mere tolerance, a respect for the inherent and equal right of everyone to worship God as they think best. "The Government of the United States," he said, "which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens." Over the years, Washington's rejection of religious bigotry has matured from a foundation of our domestic politics into a guiding doctrine of our foreign policy.

The American Jewish Committee deserves special credit for this progress. You were among the very first groups to support the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998. Formed to resist anti-Semitic persecution in czarist Russia, the American Jewish Committee has emerged as a great champion of religious liberty worldwide.

I am proud to say that it was a fellow Texan, Leo Napoleon Levi, who was responsible for one of the earliest American protests against anti-Semitic violence. Levi, a Galveston, Texas, lawyer and the president of the national B'nai B'rith, drafted President Theodore Roosevelt a telegram denouncing a Russian pogrom in 1903. The czar of Russia was so stung by Roosevelt's message that he formally refused to accept it. Some Americans complained that Roosevelt had gone too far. He replied that there were no crimes so monstrous—that there were crimes so monstrous that the American conscience had to assert itself.

And there still are. Such crimes are being committed today by the Government of Sudan, which is waging war against that country's traditionalist and Christian peoples. Some 2 million Sudanese have lost their lives; 4 million more have lost their homes. Hospitals, schools, churches, and international relief stations have often been bombed by Government warplanes over the 18 years of Sudan's civil war. The Government claims to have halted air attacks, but they continue. Women and children have been abducted and sold into slavery. UNICEF estimates that some 12,000 to 15,000 people are now held in bondage in Sudan.

The story of the Exodus still speaks across the millennium: No society in all of history can be justly built on the backs of slaves. Sudan is a disaster area for human rights. The right of conscience has been singled out for special abuse by the

Sudanese authorities. Aid agencies report that food assistance is sometimes distributed only to those willing to undergo conversion to Islam. We must turn the eyes of the world upon the atrocities in the Sudan.

Today I have appointed a special humanitarian coordinator, USAID Administrator Andrew Natsios. He will provide the leadership necessary to ensure that our aid goes to the needy without manipulation by those ravaging that troubled land. This is the first step. More will follow.

Our actions begin today, and my administration will continue to speak and act for as long as the persecution and atrocities in the Sudan last.

I'm pleased to say that many countries in the region show considerable and improving respect for religious liberty—Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan, and Bahrain among them. But there are other regimes, not only in north Africa and the Middle East, whose disrespect for freedom of worship is seriously disturbing. Iraq murders dissident religious figures. Iran systematically maltreats Jews, Christians, and adherents of the Baha'i faith. The Burmese junta tortures adherents of Islam, Buddhism, and Christianity. Cuba monitors and harasses independent priests and ministers. Afghanistan's Taliban government has horrified the world with its disdain for fundamental human freedoms, epitomized by its destruction of ancient Buddhist works of art. And the newly independent republics of central Asia impose troubling limits on religious expression and missionary work. We view with special concern the intensifying attacks on religious freedom in China.

In many respects, China has made great strides toward freedom in recent decades. China's economy has opened. Chinese people enjoy greater personal mobility, more secure property rights, and enlarged access to information. These are not small achievements, and they do promise even greater change.

But the Chinese Government continues to display an unreasonable and unworthy suspicion of freedom of conscience. The Chinese Government restricts independent religious expression. We hear alarming reports of the detention of worshipers and religious leaders. Churches, mosques have been vandalized or demolished. Traditional religious practices in Tibet have long been the target of especially harsh and unjust persecution. And most recently, adherents of the Falun Gong spiritual movement have been singled out for arrest and abuse.

China aspires to national strength and greatness. But these acts of persecution are acts of fear and, therefore, of weakness. This persecution is unworthy of all that China has been, a civilization with a history of tolerance. And this persecution is unworthy of all that China should become, an open society that respects the spiritual dignity of its people.

No one is a better witness to the transience of tyranny than the children of Abraham. Forty centuries ago, the Jewish people were entrusted with a truth more enduring than any power of man. In the words of the prophet Isaiah, "This shall be My covenant with them, said the Lord: My spirit which is upon you, and the words which I have placed in your mouth, shall not be absent from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your children, nor from the mouth of your children's children, said the Lord, from now, for all time."

It is not an accident that freedom of religion is one of the central freedoms in our Bill of Rights. It is the first freedom of the human soul, the right to speak the words that God places in our mouths. We must stand for that freedom in our country. We must speak for that freedom in the world. And I thank the American Jewish Committee for your willingness to do both.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:22 p.m. at the National Building Museum. In his remarks, he referred to Bruce M. Ramer, president, and David A. Harris, executive director, American Jewish Committee; Mayor Anthony A. Williams of Washington, DC; President Vicente Fox of Mexico; Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer and Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany; and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel.

Message on the Observance of Cinco de Mayo
May 2, 2001

I am pleased to send warm greetings to all those gathered to celebrate Cinco de Mayo.

May 5th marks the triumph of the spirit of freedom for the people of Mexico. The victory of General Ignacio Zaragoza and his Mexican troops over the superior French forces at the Battle of Puebla served as a stirring reminder of the determination to win the fight for Mexico's freedom from foreign intervention. The Cinco de Mayo display of courage and purpose is a source of pride for all freedom-loving people.

We Americans cherish our deep historical, cultural, economic, and, in many cases, family ties with Mexico and Latin America. Cinco de Mayo celebrations remind us how much Hispanics have influenced and enriched the United States. Hispanic Americans contribute to the shared traditions that are part of our history, including entrepreneurship, a sense of community where neighbor helps neighbor, faith, and love of family. On this special day, I encourage Americans to reaffirm the ties of culture and friendship we share with the people of Mexico and with Hispanic Americans.

As you enjoy the day with parades, folkloric dancing, and other festive activities, Laura joins me in sending best wishes for a joyous celebration.

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: This message was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 4.

Remarks on Presenting the Commander in Chief's Trophy to the United States Air Force Academy Falcons
May 4, 2001

Good morning. Thank you all for coming. It's my honor to welcome you all to the White House. I want to thank the generals who are here and the members of the congressional delegation that have come. Most of all, I want to welcome Coach DeBerry and the Fighting Falcons of the United States Air Force Academy.

It is my honor to present the Commander in Chief's Trophy, which recognizes gridiron supremacy amongst our Nation's service academies. The Falcons' record of success in service academy football is truly stellar. They won this trophy 10 of the last 12 years, 14 times overall. The seniors on this team completed their careers with a 37–12 record. It's the next-to-best record of any group of seniors in academy history, and I want to congratulate you all.

I know you all take special pride in your coach. He's got an outstanding record, as well. This is the 12th time in 17 seasons under Coach DeBerry that the Falcons have won the Commander in Chief's Trophy.

I thought it was interesting that the first time he brought his seniors to the White House was in 1986. Ronald Reagan was still the President; the Berlin Wall still stood; windows were something that you washed. [*Laughter*]

As Coach DeBerry reminded everyone at last year's White House ceremony, Presidents come and go, but coaches do not have term limits. [*Laughter*] Coach, a word of caution—[*laughter*]—winning this trophy is supposed to be a struggle, not a hobby. [*Laughter*] And the truth is, if you spend any more time in Washington, the folks back in Colorado Springs are going to start saying you're out of touch. [*Laughter*]

I love Coach DeBerry's motto: Faith, family, and Falcons. This is a man who has his priorities straight. And they must be, because he's not just recruiting football talent; he's recruiting character. He's not just recruiting to win football games; he's recruiting to win our Nation's wars, if we have one.

These seniors know that conference titles, bowl victories, and trophies are not nearly as important as the solemn oath they will take in just a few weeks as newest officers in the world's finest Air Force. Today we honor the history that you've made on the playing field. But we look forward to even more of the history you will make serving our Nation.

Coach DeBerry, if the past is prologue, I suspect you, too, will have a bright future. And you've got an opener next season with another team that recently visited the White House, the mighty Oklahoma Sooners. And my hope is that you try to soften them up a bit before they play the Texas teams. [*Laughter*]

But it's my honor to congratulate you, and congratulations in advance for the service you will render to our fabulous Nation.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:35 a.m. at the South Portico at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Fisher DeBerry, football coach, U.S. Air Force Academy. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Coach DeBerry.

Remarks Honoring the 2000 World Series Champion New York Yankees
May 4, 2001

Thank you. Please sit down. Well, it's my honor to welcome the mighty Yanks to the Rose Garden, a team that broke my heart many a time, as the owner of the Texas Rangers. [*Laughter*]

I'm so glad you all are here, and I appreciate the mayor being here—the Yankees' number one fan—and members of the congressional delegation who are here, as well. Thank you all for coming.

It's good to see my old fellow owner, "the Boss." [*Laughter*] What a record you've had—a man who demands excellence and oftentimes gets it. [*Laughter*] But thank you for coming, George. I know the real boss of the Yankees is here, too, Arthur Richman. [*Laughter*] How are you, Arthur? Good to see you. I told you one of these days we would get to the White House. Just don't take any silverware, Arthur. [*Laughter*]

It's good to see Randy and Brian Cashman. Thank you all for coming. I am—I understand something about baseball. It

not only takes great players to win a championship, it takes a great manager, too. And I know all sports fans are impressed by the class of Joe Torre. What a heck of a man he is. And Don Zimmer, you're not so bad, either. [*Laughter*]

But one of the things everybody forgets about Joe is that he was a pretty darn good player himself. Thirty years ago, he led the National League with a .363 batting average, 137 RBIs, and it's sure good to welcome you back here, Joe. [*Laughter*]

And there are fellow Texans on this team, and around here that counts for something. [*Laughter*] So it's good to see "the Rocket"—a friend of my family's, Roger Clemens—Andy Pettitte, and Chuck Knoblauch.

I—something about the Yankees. It's one of the greatest names in sport. It's a tradition and a powerful tradition. I mean, you put on a uniform, it's just not work clothes; it's the uniform that Ruth wore or Gehrig wore, and you all have kept up that tradition. And for that, you need to be congratulated.

It's interesting that we're hosting the great Yanks here in the Rose Garden, and then this Sunday there's a little different celebration taking place. It's a baseball celebration. But on the other side of the driveway down there, we've set up a tee-ball park. And it's a chance for moms and dads to bring tee-ball teams to celebrate the great sport of baseball right here on the hallowed grounds of the White House. Yankee Stadium is hallowed grounds; so is the White House.

What's going to be interesting about that day is, there is going to be some little kid trying to adjust his batting gloves just like Jeter does, or somebody trying to look like Mariano Rivera, or somebody trying to emulate the swing of Tino Martinez. That's what's going to happen. And as a reminder to those who are on the field that a lot of kids look at you—they really do—and there's a lot of parents pulling for the Yanks to be champs not only on the field but off the field. And there's no question in my mind that these Yanks will rise to both occasions.

Welcome to the White House.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:32 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani of New York City and the following New York Yankees personnel: George Steinbrenner III, principal owner; Arthur Richman, senior adviser; Randy Levine, president; Brian Cashman, senior vice president and general manager; Joe Torre, manager; Don Zimmer, assistant manager; Roger Clemens, Andy Pettitte, and Mariano Rivera, pitchers; Chuck Knoblauch, outfielder; Derek Jeter, shortstop; and Tino Martinez, first baseman.

Remarks at a Cinco de Mayo Celebration
May 4, 2001

Thank you all. We welcome you to this Cinco de Mayo celebration, even though it's on the *quatro de Mayo*. [*Laughter*] But it's such an important holiday, we decided to start early.

I really appreciate *el Embajador de Mexico,* Juan Jose Bremer. Thank you for your kind words, thank you for your leadership, and welcome.

I appreciate so very much Thalia for being here. I am thankful that she did not ask me to dance. [*Laughter*] But I loved her voice and loved her music. Pablo Montero—thank you very much, Pablo, for

coming. We will treasure that beautiful gift you gave to Laura, via me. [*Laughter*]

It is a pleasure to see my friend Don Francisco. I had the honor of interviewing with Don Francisco before. He's a good man. And finally, *por fin, mi amigo* Emilio Estefan—Emilio, thank you very much for coming. He's lucky we didn't let him in without Gloria. [*Laughter*] I know you join me in thanking the fantastic dancers and the mariachis. It's such beautiful music, and the White House is blessed by your presence.

Some in my administration are here that I must introduce. Hector Barreto, he's going to make fine leader of the Small Business Administration; Eduardo Aguirre, who is going to be a senior official at the Export-Import Bank—Eduardo. Rosario Marin is here; she is going to be the Treasurer of the United States. We could go on all day long, but there's one other fellow I want to introduce. He's a friend of Mexico. He's a great United States Senator, the Senator from the State of New Mexico, Pete Domenici. Is Ed Pastor here? I don't see Ed.

Today we remember a proud moment for the people of Mexico, when Mexican soldiers won the Battle of Puebla. When the news of that victory reached this house, it was recognized and recorded by Abraham Lincoln. Then, and for many years afterwards, the United States and Mexico lived two very different histories, often divided by misperceptions and mistrust. It's changed. The United States and Mexico now share ties of history, *familia*, values, commerce, and culture. We are more united in friendship and common purpose than ever before.

Just yesterday I had yet another visit with my friend *el Presidente* Vicente Fox. This is the third time my friend and I have had a chance to dialog about the incredibly important relationship between the United States and Mexico. And I hope people take note that in a few months he'll come back as the honored guest of the first state dinner I will have as President of the United States. We have worked together as Governors; we will work together as Presidents. And we'll always work in the spirit of mutual respect.

Cinco de Mayo is a day for special pride and remembrance for people on—it's a reminder of the pride—of the proud heritage of many Americans and the warm and growing friendship between two great nations. It's a day worth celebrating.

I want to thank you all for coming. Laura and I welcome you—so pleased so many folks came. Again, I want to thank the fantastic artists who are here. *Mi Casa Blanca es su Casa Blanca. Adios.*

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:23 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mexican Ambassador to the United States Juan Jose Bremer; entertainers Thalia, Pablo Montero, and Emilio and Gloria Estefan; Spanish-language television host Mario Kreutzberger, popularly known as "Don Francisco"; and President Vicente Fox of Mexico.

The President's Radio Address
May 5, 2001

Good morning. Today I want to offer a special greeting to everyone celebrating Cinco de Mayo. This day marks the proud moment when Mexican soldiers threw back an invading army at the Battle of Puebla. One hundred and thirty-nine years later, Cinco de Mayo pays tribute to the strong

and independent spirit of the Mexican people.

We celebrated a little early at the White House this year, on *quatro de Mayo*, with a fiesta on the South Lawn, with the mariachi music, folkloric dancing, and an ample supply of Mexican food. For a little while, it was just like being in Texas again.

Growing up in Texas gave me many things I'm thankful for, and one of them is an appreciation of the Hispanic culture. In Texas, it's in the air you breathe. Hispanic life, Hispanic culture, and Hispanic values are inseparable from the life of our State and have been for many generations. The history of Mexican-American relations has had its troubled moments, but today our peoples enrich each other in trade and culture and family ties.

To affirm that friendship, Laura and I have invited Mexican President Vicente Fox to be the guest of honor at the very first state dinner of my administration. President Fox is a fine man, a man of powerful ideals and a great vision for his country. We have already met three times this year. I consider him a friend. We are committed to working together in common purpose for the good of both countries. Whether the issue is free trade or energy production, environmental protection or the control of illegal drugs, our interests are often the same.

In the United States, I'm happy to say, we're putting old fears and quarrels behind us. We know that we must protect the integrity of our border, yet we understand how that border can be viewed from the other side as the gateway to better wages and a better life. I've often said that family values don't stop at the Rio Grande. The best way to have a stable border is better opportunity in both our nations, opportunity built by trade and education and freedom.

And when immigrants come to America legally, their culture and contribution must be treated with respect. They have an equal place in the American story, a story written in many hands and told in many languages. This welcoming spirit is the heritage of the immigrant Nation and the commitment of my administration.

Cinco de Mayo is a day for special pride and remembrance for all of Mexico. And for all Americans, it is a reminder of the heritage we share with our neighbor to the south and the great promise of the future.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9 a.m. on May 4 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 5. The address was also recorded in Spanish. Both transcripts were made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 4 but were embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Amir Hamad Khalifa of Bahrain
May 7, 2001

President Bush. It's my honor to welcome His Highness to America. Bahrain is a close friend of our country. It housed our 5th Fleet—strong allies. He has made a big difference in his own country, been on the leading edge of reform. He believes in human rights and believes in the full participation of the people of his land. And we're really grateful for your leadership. It's such an honor to welcome you here.

Amir Khalifa. Thank you. I am pleased to have this honor today to meet with the President, who has been promising from the day he wanted to be in this job. And

I'm sure America will do a great thing and move forward in all fields, for the stability and security, mainly, of my region, the Gulf region.

We have an old relationship that's lasted for more than a hundred-and-something years. And I think we will keep that one. And that's why I'm here, to consult on matters of security, on matters of trade, on matters of development. And I thank the President for his invitation, his kind invitation.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:05 p.m. in the Colonnade at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to the Council of the Americas Conference
May 7, 2001

Thank you, Mr. Rhodes. I'm honored, and thank you for having me, sir. It's an honor to be here with Senator Chuck Hagel. He's a man who's got a good vision of the world. He's also a fine United States Senator, I might add. Thank you for being here, Senator. It's good to see Ambassadors from nations in our hemisphere. Mr. Rockefeller, thank you very much for your support of trade in our hemisphere.

It's an honor to be here with the best pick I could have possibly made to be the Secretary of State, and that's Colin Powell. He's doing a really good job of making the case for our country in a strong and humble way. When it's all said and done, his tenure is going to mean the world is more peaceful and more prosperous.

I appreciate so very much Peter Romero from the State Department, who has been working side by side with those of us at the White House. I appreciate Thomas McNamara and Bill Pryce, as well. And thank you all for coming, and thank you for letting me talk about a subject near and dear to my heart.

The Council of the Americas was formed 36 years ago, in a different America. And it's certainly a different world. In 1965 international trade and investment mattered much less to the U.S. economy. We traded mostly with the countries of Europe. Interestingly enough, at that point in time, Mexico was our fifth largest trading partner. Today, she's the second largest trading partner, behind Canada.

In 1965 so few Americans traced their ancestry to Latin America that the census didn't even bother to tabulate them. Today, some 35 million Americans are of Hispanic origin. In 1965 military and authoritarian regimes ruled all too many of the countries of the Americas. Today, with one sad, solitary exception, every nation in our hemisphere has an elected government.

Our recent summit in Quebec symbolized the new reality in our hemisphere, a unity of shared values, shared culture, and shared trade. And together, we made good progress at that summit, the beginnings of a really strong and fruitful relationship all throughout the hemisphere.

In 1980s and the early nineties, our Nation negotiated many important trade agreements: the U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement, the North American Free Trade Agreement, and the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade talks. Since then, efforts have stalled as U.S. trade promotion authority was allowed to lapse. The inactivity of the American Government has had real costs for the American people. The United States has few better friends, for example, than the Republic of Chile, but the fact is, Canadian goods sold in Chile pay a lower tariff than American goods do,

because the United States has left its trade talks with Chile unfinished.

Free trade agreements are being negotiated all over the world, and we're not a party to them. And this has got to change.

Americans are the world's preeminent inventor of new technology and the world's biggest foreign investor. We're the world's most efficient food producer and the world's leading source of information and entertainment. For our farmers and our inventors, for our artists and for ordinary savers, open trade pays off in the form of higher incomes and higher returns.

We benefit from open trade in less tangible ways, as well. Americans want to live on a cleaner planet; we want labor standards upheld and children protected from exploitation. Americans want human rights and individual freedom to advance. Open trade advances those American values, those universal values.

By failing to make the case for trade, we've allowed a new kind of protectionism to appear in this country. It talks of workers, while it opposes a major source of new jobs. It talks of the environment, while opposing the wealth-creating policies that will pay for clean air and water in developing nations. It talks of the disadvantaged, even as it offers ideas that would keep many of the poor in poverty.

Open trade is not just an economic opportunity; it is a moral imperative. Trade creates jobs for the unemployed. When we negotiate for open markets, we are providing new hope for the world's poor. And when we promote open trade, we are promoting political freedom. Societies that open to commerce across their borders will open to democracy within their borders, not always immediately and not always smoothly, but in good time.

Look at our friends, Mexico, and the political reforms there. Look at Taiwan. Look at South Korea. And some day soon, I hope that an American President will end that list by adding, look at China. I believe in open trade with China, because I believe that freedom can triumph in China.

Later this week, I will send the outline of my trade agenda to Congress. My administration wants to work with Congress and to listen to what the Members have to say. We've been especially impressed by the fresh new thinking of many Members about how to advance environmental and worker protection concerns in ways that open trade rather than closing trade. They recognize that one-size-fits-all policies can't succeed. They know we need a toolbox equipped to match diverse tools with diverse problems, and I agree.

And one tool I must have is renewed U.S. trade promotion authority. I urge the Congress: Restore our Nation's authority to negotiate trade agreements, and I will use that authority to build freedom in the world, progress in our hemisphere, and enduring prosperity in the United States.

We must pass the free trade agreement with Jordan, one of our best friends in the Middle East. We need to complete our free trade agreement with Singapore. We must proceed with other bilateral and regional agreements. And the time has come for a new global trade round.

I'm optimistic about trade. I'm also realistic about trade. I will enforce our laws against unfair trade practices. And I want to consider how we can improve our program for trade adjustment assistance when it comes up for reauthorization next year. But we must understand that the transition costs of open trade are dwarfed by open trade's benefits that are measured not only in dollars and cents but in human freedom, human dignity, human rights, and human progress.

We must make those benefits a reality for all the people of our hemisphere. And that's the task ahead. I accept it with enthusiasm. And I'm counting on the Council's help to bring sanity to the United States Congress.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:33 p.m. at the State Department. In his remarks, he referred to William R. Rhodes, member, David Rockefeller, honorary chair, Thomas E. McNamara, president, board of directors, and William T. Pryce, vice president, Washington operations, Council of the Americas; and Peter F. Romero, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Burdensharing in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization
May 7, 2001

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Pursuant to section 3(2)(B) of the Senate's resolution of April 30, 1998, providing its advice and consent to ratification of the Protocols on the Accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949, I hereby transmit to you the report concerning NATO membership, burdensharing in the Alliance, and other matters.

The report is comprised of two sections that provide the required information to the extent that such information is available. An unclassified section covering common NATO budgets, national defense budgets, costs incurred to date in connection with the membership of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, and the status of discussions concerning NATO membership for Partnership for Peace countries. A separate, confidential section covers NATO members' capabilities to deploy and sustain combat forces and the adequacy of European defense budgets to meet the requirements of NATO force goals and capabilities initiatives.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; John W. Warner, chairman, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Ted Stevens, chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Henry J. Hyde, chairman, House Committee on International Relations; Bob Stump, chairman, House Committee on Armed Services; and C.W. Bill Young, chairman, House Committee on Appropriations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 8.

Remarks Honoring the Small Business Person of the Year
May 8, 2001

Thank you very much. Be seated, please. Welcome to the people's house for the Small Business Person of the Year Award ceremony. It's an honor for me to be here. Can't wait to find out who won. [*Laughter*]

John, thank you very much for hosting this event. It's good to see Members of the United States Senate here, Senator Bond and Senator Shelby, strong advocates of small-business growth in America. Welcome, Senators.

It's good to have Don Manzullo here, as well as Frank Mascara. Thank you all for coming. Congressman, thank you for being here, as well. It's an honor to have Members of the United States Congress

who care deeply about making sure that the environment for small-business growth is strong and positive in America. These Members understand what I know: The role of Government is not to create wealth; the role of Government is to create an environment in which people who have a dream of owning their own business are able to do so if they've got the good idea and are willing to work hard for it.

We've had some pretty negative news recently about employment figures. But one thing Congress must always remember is that to make sure that the employment figures improve, we must remember that small businesses create most of the new jobs in America, and therefore, we've got to put forth good policy that encourages the entrepreneurial spirit to flourish. And I can't think of better policy than to reduce all the marginal rates of income tax.

We're getting a budget about done. And then we're going to have to figure out the details of the tax policy, and you can help. You can help by reminding Members of the United States Congress, both in the Senate and the House—you don't have to remind these, because they already know what I'm about to say—but that all rates need to be cut. We don't need any targeted tax cuts. That means Congress gets to pick. Some people get tax cuts; some people don't. That's not fair; that's not the American way. If you pay taxes, you ought to get relief.

And the Congress needs to hear this, as well, that many small businesses in America are unincorporated. They are sole proprietorships. They pay rates on the personal scale. And by cutting that top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent, we encourage entrepreneurial growth in America; we encourage small-business formation. We're saying that we understand the power of small business in America, the importance to the future of this country, and by letting small-business owners keep more of their own money, it's good for America.

Congress needs to hear that message, that this tax cut is good for small-business growth, and you can help. I found out voices make a difference up here in Washington, particularly when they're calling on the phone saying, "Let's get something good done on the tax cut. Let's make sure you understand growth—a pro-growth environment."

And there's another place you can help, too. And that's on getting rid of one part of the Tax Code that's incredibly unfair to small-business people, and that's the death tax. The death tax is unfair.

People need to hear from you. They need to hear it's unfair to tax a person's assets twice, once when they're building the asset up and then when you try to pass it on to your heirs. People work in the small-business sector—you know this as well as I do—to build something up to leave it to maybe a son or a daughter. Nothing more prideful for people than to work their life and to be able to say to a son or a daughter, "Here's the business. You go run it now. You take it to new heights."

But that's not the way our—that's not the way this Tax Code works. It says, when you pass on, your heirs are going to have to pay an incredibly high tax. It's especially onerous—this death tax is especially onerous on small-business entrepreneurs in America, and we need to get rid of it. And we need to get rid of it right now.

One thing I know, and you know, that a small business is built on values. And good, strong values are what distinguish all four of the finalists who are here today.

Cindy McEntee* is an active member of her community, a selfless volunteer, a devoted employer. I was struck about the story about one—a longtime employee had to be airlifted for emergency hospital care in the middle of the night, one of her fellow employees. She woke up the next morning to drive 120 miles, from Newport

* White House correction.

to Portland, Oregon, to make sure that that person was getting the care she needed. That's the sign of a good boss. That's the sign of a good small-business owner. I bet morale is high in her company.

Thornton Stanley is a deacon in his church, a good dad, a loyal alumnus of Alabama A&M, a fine family man. He built his business on quality, on what he calls "playing it straight." It's a pretty good motto.

Frank Sarris shows what drive and determination and frugality can build. He's a dreamer who worked hard to achieve his dream.

Brindley Pieters is a man who took risk, never lost hope.

All four of these fine Americans represent the best of small businesses. I can't wait to find out who won. [*Laughter*] I want to thank you for what you all do for America. I want to thank you for being good employers. I want to thank you for expanding the job base. I also want to thank you for being good stewards in your community. You recognize what I know, that our communities are only as strong as the willingness of people to put time and effort and love into our neighborhoods. Small-business people do that every day.

Thank you all for coming to the White House, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:37 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to John D. Whitmore, Jr., Acting Administrator, Small Business Administration; Cindy M. McEntee, owner and president, Mo's Enterprises, Inc., Newport, OR; Thornton Stanley, president, Stanley Construction Co., Inc., Huntsville, AL; Frank Sarris, president, Sarris Candies, Inc., Canonsburg, PA; and Brindley B. Pieters, president, Brindley Pieters & Associates, Inc., Altamonte Springs, FL. The Small Business Week proclamation of May 4 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on Domestic Preparedness Against Weapons of Mass Destruction

May 8, 2001

Protecting America's homeland and citizens from the threat of weapons of mass destruction is one of our Nation's important national security challenges. Today, more nations possess chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons than ever before. Still others seek to join them. Most troubling of all, the list of these countries includes some of the world's least responsible states—states for whom terror and blackmail are a way of life. Some non-state terrorist groups have also demonstrated an interest in acquiring weapons of mass destruction.

Against this backdrop, it is clear that the threat of chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons being used against the United States—while not immediate—is very real. That is why our Nation actively seeks to deny chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons to those seeking to acquire them. That is why, together with our allies, we seek to deter anyone who would contemplate their use. And that is also why we must ensure that our Nation is prepared to defend against the harm they can inflict.

Should our efforts to reduce the threat to our country from weapons of mass destruction be less than fully successful, prudence dictates that the United States be fully prepared to deal effectively with the consequences of such a weapon being used here on our soil.

Today, numerous Federal departments and agencies have programs to deal with

the consequences of a potential use of a chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear weapon in the United States. Many of these Federal programs offer training, planning, and assistance to State and local governments. But to maximize their effectiveness, these efforts need to be seamlessly integrated, harmonious, and comprehensive.

Therefore, I have asked Vice President Cheney to oversee the development of a coordinated national effort so that we may do the very best possible job of protecting our people from catastrophic harm. I have also asked Joe Allbaugh, the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, to create an Office of National Preparedness. This Office will be responsible for implementing the results of those parts of the national effort overseen by Vice President Cheney that deal with consequence management. Specifically, it will coordinate all Federal programs dealing with weapons of mass destruction consequence management within the Departments of Defense, Health and Human Services, Justice, and Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency, and other Federal agencies. The Office of National Preparedness will work closely with State and local governments to ensure their planning, training, and equipment needs are addressed. FEMA will also work closely with the Department of Justice, in its lead role for crisis management, to ensure that all facets of our response to the threat from weapons of mass destruction are coordinated and cohesive. I will periodically chair a meeting of the National Security Council to review these efforts.

No governmental responsibility is more fundamental than protecting the physical safety of our Nation and its citizens. In today's world, this obligation includes protection against the use of weapons of mass destruction. I look forward to working closely with Congress so that together we can meet this challenge.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Peacekeeping
May 8, 2001

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am pleased to transmit herewith the 2000 Annual Report to the Congress on Peacekeeping required by section 4 of the United Nations Participation Act (22 U.S.C. 287b).

United Nations and other peacekeeping operations conducted under the previous Administration helped us protect U.S. interests before they were directly threatened and helped ensure that other nations shared with us the risks and costs of maintaining international stability.

I look forward to working with you to ensure that, under the right circumstances, peacekeeping remains a viable option for dealing with international conflicts.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; John W. Warner, chairman, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Ted Stevens, chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Henry J. Hyde, chairman, House Committee on International Relations; Bob Stump, chairman, House Committee on Armed Services; and C.W. Bill Young, chairman, House Committee on Appropriations.

Remarks at the Electronic Industries Alliance Dinner
May 8, 2001

Thank you all. Thank you very much. Dave, thank you very much. I thought for a minute he was going to bring up the OU-Texas score, but—[*laughter*]—he's a diplomat at heart. I appreciate your leadership, and I appreciate your friendship, and I want to thank you for inviting me here to the Electronic Industry Alliance dinner.

I want to thank the chairman, Cliff Smith, for his hospitality as well. I see the Ambassador from our great friend the nation of Israel, here. Ambassador Ivry, good to see you, sir. Thank you very much for being here. I wasn't exactly sure why you were going to be here until I realized that this banquet is going to honor Felix Zandman for his contribution. Mr. Zandman, congratulations, sir. It must be a pretty big deal to get the Ambassador to come to a black-tie dinner like this.

I know Members of the Congress are here: Congressmen Barr, Hutchinson, Issa; Sheila Jackson-Lee from my old hometown of Houston, Texas; and Congressman Nick Smith. It's good to see the Members of Congress who are here, as well.

I'm honored to speak here, and I want to thank you for giving me a chance. First, it gives me a chance to tell you that Laura and I are doing great. I love my job. It's hard to describe the honor I feel every morning walking into the Oval Office. I'm confident that my last day in office will be just like my first—that Oval Office just inspires an awesome sense of responsibility. And I accept it.

On my way out, Laura, the First Lady, said, "Where are you going?" I said, "Well, I'm going to go speak to a banquet of high-tech entrepreneurs and people who are making the economy grow." She said, "Whatever you do, don't try to be charming, witty, or debonair." [*Laughter*] "Just be yourself." [*Laughter*] She sends her best. [*Laughter*]

It is my honor to be with innovators and visionaries, the folks that really epitomize what America is all about. Ours is a land of people who dream big and are willing to work hard to achieve the dreams, which means that Government has got a unique role. And the role of Government is not to create wealth; the role of our Government is to create an environment in which the entrepreneur can flourish, in which minds can expand, in which technologies can reach new frontiers.

And so, tonight I want to talk about three areas where Government can help. And the first comes with understanding the role of taxation in our society. I remember campaigning throughout our great land and talking about the need to cut taxes. And there were a lot of blank stares for quite a while. I suspect some thought that I was just saying that we ought to have tax relief because it might have sounded good.

But I campaigned for tax relief because I thought it was right for America. And I'm pleased to report that we're making good progress. I want to thank both Republicans and Democrats for setting out a budget that understands the projected surplus is not the Government's money. The surplus is the people's money, and we need to share some of that surplus with the people who pay the bills.

It's been an interesting debate. But fortunately, the debate understands the role of the entrepreneur in our society. The budget should be passed here this week, and then the respective committees will begin deciding how to cut the taxes.

My strong suggestion is that we focus first on cutting all marginal rates; that the idea of Congress trying to pick and choose winners and losers in the Tax Code is not fair, and it's not right. We need to reduce every rate on every taxpayer in America, including the top rate.

I'm confident we'll be able to work together to make the code more fair. Our Tax Code is unfair for people who live on the outskirts of poverty. The example I like to use is this one: If you're a single mother in America—by the way, she works the toughest job in America, raising children by herself—and if you're making $22,000 a year, for every additional dollar this hard-working woman makes, she pays a higher marginal rate on that dollar than someone who is successful in America. And folks, that's not right.

The American experience says to us that the harder you work, the more easy your life ought to be. And therefore, to reduce the high marginal rates on people trying to get ahead, we need to drop the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent and increase the child credit from $500 to $1,000 per child. The code will be more fair. It's as if we will eliminate a toll booth that sits right in the road—in the middle of the road to the middle class.

But I want Congress to also understand that it's not only important to drop the bottom rate; it's important to drop the top rate, as well. By dropping the top rate, we encourage growth, capital formation, and the entrepreneurial spirit.

It's important for Congress to understand that many small businesses in our society are sole proprietorships or Subchapter S's. They don't pay the corporate tax rate; they pay high personal rates. And when you drop the top rate, we're sending a strong signal that says we want the small business to flourish. We want the small business to become the big business.

No, tax rates need to be cut. We can afford tax cuts, and the way our economy is behaving today, we can't afford not to have tax cuts. And it's time for the Congress to act.

We need to ban Internet access taxes. We need to understand how powerful the Internet can be to commerce and growth. We need to have a permanent R&D tax credit in our system. You see, it's important to create certainty. It's important for planners and corporate executives to understand the rules and that the rules won't change. It's important for Congress to understand that tax relief provides consumer confidence. Long-term, steady tax policy is necessary to encourage deployment of capital throughout our society.

I believe we're going to have good tax relief, but I'd like for you to continue to work with us. You're only an e-mail away or a call away. It's important. Now is the time to act.

It's also important for this Nation to develop an energy policy. For too long, we have had no energy policy. And like you, I'm deeply concerned about consumer prices. They're going up. I'm concerned about rolling blackouts in California. I'm concerned what that could mean to entrepreneurial growth and to the high-tech industry.

It is so important for our Nation to work on conservation. And I believe there are new technologies coming aboard that will encourage conservation, that will make it easier for all of us, consumer and business alike, to conserve precious energy. But we can't conserve our way to energy independence, folks. We need a policy that encourages exploration and expansion of the infrastructure, necessary not only to find natural gas that's fueling many of the new plants being brought online but the pipelines necessary to carry that natural gas to places where they'll be used. We need more electricity wires carrying product across the country. It is time for an administration to step up and develop an energy policy that's good for the long-term economic growth of this country. And that's exactly what this administration is going to do.

There is concern about our environment in our society, and there should be. Mine is an administration that wants to foster good, commonsense conservation policy. But I believe strongly, with the technological advances we have made in our country, that we can not only find new product,

but we can do so in a way that is sensitive to the environmental concerns of many in America.

And finally, an area that will help create an environment that fosters growth and wealth and expands opportunity to anybody who's fortunate enough to be an American is trade. It is important for our Nation to understand the benefits of open markets around the world. It's important for those who not only create jobs but those who work, to realize that a confident nation that opens up markets is one that will create not only opportunities at home but opportunities abroad.

I've seen the benefits of open trade. As the Governor of the State of Texas, of course, I was deeply concerned about our policies to our neighbor to the south, Mexico. I always felt like Mexico was our friend, and we wanted our friend to be strong and vibrant and successful. We wanted our neighborhood to have opportunity for all.

There are some in our country who want to build walls between the United States and other nations such as Mexico. But those who build walls aren't confident about America and our potential and our ability to compete. Those who build walls don't realize what a wall would do in our own neighborhood. It's time to tear down walls not only in our hemisphere but around the world. It's time to promote open markets. I strongly believe open markets will lead to better lives for people.

I've been questioned about my policy toward China. China is a great emerging nation. I strongly support trade with China. I not only do so because I know it's good for our entrepreneurs, our high-tech folks, our farmers and ranchers, but for those of us—and I know we all share the same thing in America—who adhere to the ideals of freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom to—freedom of press.

Open markets eventually will cause folks to demand more freedoms—when they get a taste of the marketplace—inside countries that restrict freedom. When they get that sense of freedom of demand and freedom to produce, they will eventually demand from their governments the other freedoms that we take for granted. Open trade is good for the promotion of freedom around the world.

And so I ask Congress to give the President something other Presidents have had in the past, and that's trade promotion authority, so an administration can negotiate with confidence free trade agreements, not only in the hemisphere but trade agreements with countries like Jordan and Singapore.

There's a new protectionist sentiment in America that we need to resist. And sometimes it's couched in words like "the environment" or "labor agreements." But I want to remind the skeptics that as we spread wealth around the world, it is more likely that a worker will have better conditions where he or she works. And it is impossible for poor nations to achieve environmental successes. By encouraging wealth in developing nations, it will help those nations improve their own environmental policy. We should resist protectionism, and we should fight those who want to wall off America from the benefits of free trade.

And so I ask for your help. As we get trade promotion authority moving through the Congress, I hope you remind Members of the Congress and the Senate the good benefits that open trade can mean not only to the entrepreneur but to the working people in our country and with those with whom we trade.

And along those lines, during the campaign I promised to lead an effort to reform our export control system so that it safeguards genuine military technology while letting American companies sell items that are already widely available. And we're making good progress. I want to thank Dave for his help.

I've been working with my friend Senator Phil Gramm from Texas to reform the Export Administrative Act, to strengthen both

national security and our high-tech industry. In March, I'm pleased to report, the Senate Banking Committee passed a revised EAA, which my administration strongly supports. It's now time to pass it for the House, so I can sign it into law.

I've got a bigger job than just passing laws, and it's one to really change the tone in Washington. I think that's an important mission for my administration to say to the good folks in this town that, whether you're Republican or Democrat, we need to treat each other with respect. It is so important that all of us work together to develop a culture of respect, so that when people look at our Nation's Capital, they like what they see. And I think we're making some progress. There's still the occasional shrill voice that is trying to tear somebody down. There are those who still believe in zero-sum politics—if so-and-so gets his bill, so-and-so loses. That's not how I view my job, nor how I view good public policy.

I try to separate politics from policy. We've had plenty of politics; it's now time for good public policy. It's time to understand that we'll be judged based upon what we do, not how we talk—thank goodness. [*Laughter*]

I believe when it's all said and done, we will have developed a culture of accomplishment here in Washington, as well. I think people are beginning to realize that this President will share credit, that this President isn't trying to figure out how to one-up somebody, that my focus is on the people, the people of this great land.

Which leads me to my final hope, and that is, we need to develop a culture of responsibility in America, a responsibility that spreads all throughout this great land, where people understand that if you're a mom or a dad, if you're fortunate enough to be a parent, that your main responsibility is to love your children with all your heart and all your soul. That's your most important job.

It's important, in a period of personal responsibility, to understand that you must love a neighbor like you would like to be loved yourself. One of the most important initiatives we're working with the Congress on is a faith-based, community-based initiative that recognizes the limitations of government and also recognizes that there are fantastic programs all across America where somebody has said, "What can I do to help? What can I do to help change somebody's life?"

One of the most important initiatives we're working with Congress on is to provide grant monies to encourage mentoring to children whose parents may be in prison, so that some soul who lives in the greatest land on the face of the Earth will understand there's hope and a future, will understand when somebody puts his arm around them and says, "I love you. I care for you."

Government can't make people love one another. But Government can encourage those who do love, and Government can also set an example. Government can uphold the high responsibilities of the offices to which we have been elected. It's an important task for America, that when they look at their Government, they're proud of what they see. I think we're making progress. I certainly hope so. It is a charge I intend to keep.

Thank you for having me.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:20 p.m. in the Constitution Ballroom at the Grand Hyatt Washington at a dinner for leaders of Government and industry. In his remarks, he referred to Dave McCurdy, president, and Cliff Smith, chairman, Electronic Industries Alliance; Israeli Ambassador to the United States David Ivry; and Felix Zandman, chairman and chief executive officer, Vishay Intertechnology, Inc.

Remarks Announcing Nominations for the Federal Judiciary
May 9, 2001

Thank you all very much. Attorney General, it's good to see you, sir, and happy birthday. Today is his birthday. Also, Judge Al Gonzales is here. Judge Gonzales is a great friend of mine who, fortunately, is my lawyer and is a part of the process, judicial selection process. Thank you for being here, Judge.

I'm also honored to welcome Members of the United States Senate who are here to welcome the nominees to Washington: Of course, Senator Orrin Hatch, chairman of the Judiciary, as well as Senator Patrick Leahy, ranking member on the Judiciary. It's good to see you men. Thank you both for coming. John Warner, George Allen, George Voinovich, and last but not least, Senator Strom Thurmond, welcome. Thank you all for coming.

I'm pleased to welcome my judicial nominees to the White House. And I'm pleased to welcome their family and friends, as well.

This is a proud moment for all of you, and it's a proud moment for me, as well. A President has few greater responsibilities than that of nominating men and women to the courts of the United States. A Federal judge holds a position of great influence and respect and can hold it for a lifetime. When a President chooses a judge, he is placing in human hands the authority and majesty of the law. He owes it to the Constitution and to the country to choose with care. I have done so.

With me this afternoon are my first 11 judicial nominees, individuals of experience and character. Four of them serve as United States district judges, all four confirmed by unanimous votes. Two others are sitting judges on State supreme courts. Four have served as law clerks in the Supreme Court of the United States. One has served here as an Associate Counsel to the President. One already holds the position for which I nominate him, by recess appointment of President Clinton.

These men and women have followed different paths to this nomination. They come from diverse backgrounds and will bring a wide range of experience to the bench. All have sterling credentials and have met high standards of legal training, temperament, and judgment. As a group, they command broad, bipartisan support among those who know them and who have served with them. I submit their names to the Senate with full confidence that they will satisfy any test of judicial merit.

These first nominations are also an opportunity to outline the standards by which I will choose all Federal judges. The American people expect judges of the highest caliber, and my nominees will meet that test. A judge, by the most basic measure, has an obligation shared by the President and Members of Congress. All of us are constitutional officers, sworn to serve within the limits of our Constitution and laws. When we observe those limits, we exercise our rightful power. When we exceed those limits, we abuse our powers.

Every judge I appoint will be a person who clearly understands the role of a judge is to interpret the law, not to legislate from the bench. To paraphrase the third occupant of this house, James Madison, the courts exist to exercise not the will of men but the judgment of law. My judicial nominees will know the difference. Understanding this will make them more effective in the defense of rights guaranteed under the Constitution, the enforcement of our laws, and more effective in assuming that justice is done to the guilty and for the innocent.

My standard is informed by the oath that each judge will take: to administer justice without respect to persons and to do equal right to poor and to the rich. A good judge

exercises these powers with discernment, courage, and humility. These are commitments not just to philosophy but of character. My nominees today and in the years to come will be notable for their distinction and accomplishments, and all will be exceptional for their humanity and their integrity.

With today's 11 nominees, we continue a constitutional process that involves all three branches of Government. For many weeks now, we have sought and received advice from Senators of both parties. I now submit these nominations in good faith, trusting that good faith will also be extended by the United States Senate.

Over the years, we have seen how the confirmation process can be turned to other ends. We have seen political battles played out in committee hearings, battles that have little to do with the merits of the person sitting before the committee. This is not good for the Senate, for our courts, or for the country.

There are today over 100 vacancies on the Federal courts, causing backlogs, frustration, and delay of justice. I urge Senators of both parties to rise above the bitterness of the past, to provide a fair hearing and a prompt vote to every nominee. That should be the case for no matter who lives in this house and no matter who controls the Senate.

I ask for the return of civility and dignity to the confirmation process. And with this distinguished group of nominees awaiting confirmation, there is no better opportunity than right now. I congratulate all of you on your service past and for your service to come.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:43 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on the Budget
May 9, 2001

Today's bipartisan budget vote in the House is a victory for fairness and the American people. I commend Republicans and Democrats for joining together to pass a budget framework that will return money to the taxpayers and provide reasonable spending increases. The economy continues to show troubling signs, and we must take decisive steps, like this vote today, to ensure sound fiscal policy. The American people can take heart that tax relief is one important step closer to reality.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Education Reform Legislation
May 9, 2001

I commend members of the House Education and Workforce Committee for taking the first step toward reforming America's education system and making sure no child is left behind. This legislation includes monumental reforms that promote real accountability, annual testing, and funding flexibility. Parents need to know if their children are making progress, and this legislation meets that priority. I am also pleased that this bill gives unprecedented freedom and flexibility to States and local

school districts to determine the best way to spend their Federal education dollars.

I urge Members of Congress to continue building upon our efforts to expand parental options. I will support amendments on the House floor that increase parental options and involvement.

I applaud Chairman John Boehner and Ranking Minority Member George Miller for working in a bipartisan way to move this important piece of legislation forward.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Iran
May 9, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12170 of November 14, 1979.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
May 9, 2001.

Remarks Announcing the Nomination of John P. Walters To Be Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy
May 10, 2001

The President. Thank you all so very much for being here. It's an honor to see so many Members of the United States Congress who are here. Thank you so very much for coming—and members from both political parties, members who are dedicated to joining with an administration which is dedicated to reducing drug abuse around America. Thank you for being here.

I'm pleased that members of my Cabinet have joined us: the Attorney General of the United States, John Ashcroft; the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Tommy Thompson. Thank you all for being here. Mr. Surgeon General, thank you for being here, as well, sir. We're honored to have you here. Also with us is John J. DiIulio, who is the Director of the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. John is on the leading edge of encouraging faith-based programs to become energized to help people who need help. And John, thank you so much for being here, as well.

I'm honored to be joined on stage by five Americans—well, six Americans—five Americans who won't speak—[*laughter*]—which is saying something for the first American I'm going to introduce, William J. Bennett—[*laughter*]—he was our Nation's first drug czar, former Secretary of Education, a fearless, fearless fighter against drug abuse; as well as Joe A. Califano, who has a center on addiction and substance abuse at Columbia University, former Secretary of Health and Education and Welfare under President Jimmy Carter—as well, like Mr. Bennett, a fearless advocate for those of us who are dedicated to reducing drug abuse. Thank you both for being here.

And we have three members from the community—antidrug community who have joined us. Arthur R. Dean is the chairman and CEO of the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America. Thank you so much for coming. I appreciate you being here. Jessica Hulsey is a member of the Drug-Free Communities Advisory Commission—thank you, Jessica; and Henry Lozano, Californians for Drug-Free Youth, a member of the DFCAC, a graduate from Teen Challenge.

I'm pleased to announce that as of today the Federal Government is waging an all-out effort to reduce illegal drug use in America. And I'm proud to nominate John P. Walters as my Director of National Drug Control Policy, where he will serve as a valuable member of my Cabinet.

Mr. Walters has had a distinguished career in Government. He served as the chief of staff to Bill Bennett and later served as Deputy Director and Acting Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy. John will bring tremendous skill, knowledge, and good judgment to this job. He's an articulate advocate, an able administrator, and a man of deep and reasoned convictions. He has repeatedly been called on to provide guidance to the United States Congress. John cares passionately about this issue, and he is the right person to lead America's antidrug efforts.

Our effort rests on the firm belief that by focusing more of our Nation's attention, energy, resources, real progress will be made. From the early 1980s until the early 1990s, drug use amongst high school seniors was reduced every year. We had made tremendous strides in cutting drug use. This cannot be said today. We must do and we will do a better job.

Fortunately, today, we know more about what works in prevention and education, treatment and law enforcement. We will put this knowledge to use. But above all, our efforts rest on an unwavering commitment to stop drug use. Acceptance of drug use is simply not an option for this administration.

Illegal drugs impose a staggering cost of more than $100 billion every year, principally from lost productivity. Yet this dollar figure does not capture the human tragedy of drug use: lost lives, educational and job opportunities unmet, families torn apart, health care costs, school dropout rates, and more. Drug use harms people of every economic class, but drug use is doing the most damage to the poor.

John Jacob, former president of the National Urban League, has said that drugs are destroying more children and more families than poverty ever did. John Walters and I believe the only humane and compassionate response to drug use is a moral refusal to accept it. We emphatically disagree with those who favor drug legalization.

Drug legalization would be a social catastrophe. Drug use and addiction would soar. Hospitals would be filled with many more drug emergency cases. Child abuse would increase. The cost of treatment and social welfare would rise. There would be more drug-related accidents at work and on the road. And legalizing drugs would completely undermine the message that drug use is wrong.

A successful antidrug effort depends on a thoughtful and integrated approach. Mr. Walters understands this as well as anybody in America. During his career, he's worked to improve the effectiveness of drug education and prevention programs. He played a key role in ensuring a record commitment of resources to drug treatment and research in a previous administration. He helped ensure that the Federal Government did its part in source countries, on our borders, and on our streets.

My administration will continue to work with nations to eradicate drugs at their source and enforce our borders to stop the flow of drugs into America. This will make working in close cooperation with Mexico

a priority. It will make having strong relations in our hemisphere a priority, a priority which I will keep.

However, the most effective way to reduce the supply of drugs in America is to reduce the demand for drugs in America. Therefore, this administration will focus unprecedented attention on the demand side of this problem. We recognize that the most important work to reduce drug use is done in America's living rooms and classrooms, in churches and synagogues and mosques, in the workplace, and in our neighborhoods.

Families, schools, communities, and faith-based organizations shape the character of young people. They teach children right from wrong, respect for law, respect for others, and respect for themselves. They're indispensable, and my administration stands ready to assist them in every possible way.

Joe Califano is the president of the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse and a man whose research has helped shape my thinking. Joe has said that teens of parents who eat, talk, pray, and play together are not likely to be lured into the world of drugs. A child who reaches age 21 without using illegal drugs is virtually certain never to do so. And children cite parents as the number one reason they don't use drugs. And so we'll energize the parents movement by creating a Parent Drug Corps, which will provide needed support to educate and train parents in effective drug prevention.

We must increase funding for drug-free communities programs and for the drug-free workplace program. And within 30 days, Professor John DiIulio will compile a complete inventory of existing Federal antidrug partnerships with local faith-based and community groups and work with John Walters to strengthen those efforts.

Despite every effort, however, some individuals will become addicted to drugs. There are around 5 million hardcore users of illegal drugs in America today. And while they represent one-third of the drug users, they consume two-thirds of all drugs. It is estimated that more than half of them are not receiving any treatment.

I am, therefore, asking Secretary Tommy Thompson to conduct a State-by-State inventory of treatment needs and capacity, and report back within 120 days on how to most effectively close the treatment gap in this country. In order to close that treatment gap, we'll provide $1.6 billion over the next 5 years.

We want to advance our understanding of drug abuse and addiction, so we're planning to significantly increase funding for the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. We also recognize the benefits of coerced abstinence, and so we will support drug courts and drug testing for prisoners, probationers, and parolees.

We know that inmates receiving drug treatment are 73 percent less likely to be re-arrested and 44 percent less likely to use drugs than those who receive no treatment at all. I'm, therefore, asking the Attorney General, John Ashcroft, to come up with a comprehensive plan within 120 days to ensure our Federal prisons are drug-free, to expand drug testing for probationers and parolees, and to strengthen our system of drug courts around the Nation.

We must reduce drug use for one great moral reason: Over time, drugs rob men, women, and children of their dignity and of their character. Illegal drugs are the enemies of innocence and ambition and hope. They undermine people's commitment to their family and to their fellow citizens. My administration will send a clear and consistent message that drug use is dangerous and drug use is wrong.

John Walters will lead that effort with firm resolve and a caring heart. He will do an exceptional job. I am proud to submit his name to the United States Senate, and I look forward to working with Members of the House and the Senate from

both political parties to reduce drug use in America.

I'm honored to welcome so many people who devote their lives to the well-being of others to the Rose Garden here in the White House. I want to God bless—thank you for your work and ask God's blessings on your work and this great Nation of ours.

It's my honor to welcome John Walters.

[*At this point, Director-designate Walters made brief remarks.*]

The President. Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:57 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Director-designate Walters.

Remarks to the Vienna-Madison Community Anti-Drug Coalition in Vienna, Virginia

May 10, 2001

Thank you so very much for that gracious welcome. It's my honor to be here with my newly designated Director of the National Drug Policy, and that is John Walters.

I appreciate so very much General Arthur Dean for being here, as well. He's the chairman and CEO of the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America. I want to thank Clarence Jones, who is the coordinator of Safe and Drug-Free Youth Section of the Fairfax County Public School System. Thank you very much. And Diane Eckert, program specialist in Safe and Drug-Free Youth Section of the Fairfax County Schools, thank you, Diane. And thank you for the tour.

It's also a great pleasure to be here with the Congressman from this district, Tom Davis. Thank you very much for being here, Tom. And the mayor of Vienna, Virginia—thank you, Madam Mayor, for coming. I appreciate you being here. I know we have members of the House of Delegates here from the State of Virginia. Thank you for coming. The Speaker is here. I appreciate you for being here, Mr. Speaker.

It is my honor to tour this center. And the reason I'm here is because today I talked about a goal of my administration and a goal of this Nation, and that is to wage a war on drug abuse in America, a serious effort. In my speech, when I introduced John to the Nation, I talked about the need for us to continue serious efforts of interdiction, to work with neighbors to the south of ourselves, to make sure that we interrupt the supply of drugs coming into America.

One of the things I'm proud of is my close relations with Vicente Fox, the President of Mexico. The President of Mexico has pledged to work with us to do a good job of stopping the flow of drugs across our borders. We're very much involved in the—Colombia, in the Andes, trying to eradicate coca leaves before they're manufactured into cocaine. So we'll continue to do the best we can to interdict supplies.

But the best ways to affect supply is to reduce demand for drugs. The best way to impact supply of drugs coming into America is to convince our fellow citizens not to use drugs in the first place.

This is a national problem, but our administration believes the solution is found at the local level, through community coalitions where people of good faith and good heart come together, people from all walks

of life and the communities around America come together with the dedicated proposition that through hard work and love, we can convince kids not to use drugs.

So we've come to this center because it is a part of a coalition that makes a big difference in the lives of people this part of Virginia. There are people who have said, "What can we do to make our community a better place?" And they formed a coalition; 22 groups have come together. And it's making a big difference. It's a tangible difference.

One of the things Diane and I talked about is, we want to be a results-oriented world. We want to be measurable. And this coalition is successful because it's not afraid to say, "Measure us. Let us prove to you that we do a good job." And a good job is being done. And for that, all of us say thanks to the folks who are involved in these efforts.

And the Federal Government can help. And so one of the announcements I made today was that over the next 5 years we'll double the amount of money for drug-free communities programs around America. It is necessary funding. It's a part of achieving the goal of reducing the demand for drugs in America.

Again, it also recognizes that the most effective policy really does start at the local level. The most local of all levels, by the way, is in somebody's home, where a mom or dad works with the children to help them make the right decisions, or in schools, where schools are willing to teach character education, willing to not only teach a child to read and write but also the difference between right and wrong. It comes when role models stand up and clearly say, "Drugs will destroy your life. Don't use drugs."

There's another initiative that we announced today that I think makes a lot of sense, and that is, we want to set up a Parent Drug Corps all around America. It is the use of Federal dollars to help local folks develop curriculum to teach parents in all communities across America how to deal with reduction of demand of drugs—what to say, how to say it, kind of a best practices effort. And we're determined to get the Congress to fund this new concept about involving parents more actively in the communities in which we live.

And finally, the third initiative I talked about today was, how do we make sure that people get treatment in America? We've got to make sure that those who are hooked on drugs are treated, and that's why I'm asking Congress to spend 1.6 billion additional dollars for treatment over the next 5 years. It is so important. I think an amazing statistic is that a third of the drug users consume two-thirds of the drugs. We've got people that know no other life than drugs. And a compassionate society is one that does something about drug—people who are addicted. And we're going to do so.

I believe strongly that many of the best drug programs are those founded upon faith, that they exist because people understand that if you change a person's heart, you can change their life. If a person's heart becomes changed, they themselves begin to make the right, necessary choices, make the tough choice of kicking the drug habit. A Government should never fund religion, but Government should welcome and energize faith-based programs which exist to help people kick drugs.

Ours is a strategy based upon common sense. But in order to make it work, it's going to be a strategy that is tenacious, that recognizes that this isn't about giving speeches. It is about an administration that's willing to follow through and to stay focused. And my pledge to the American people is—because I understand what a drug-free America can mean for our future and for the hopes and concerns of citizens from all walks of life—that this isn't a one-day event for the Bush administration. This is a high priority. The idea of substantially

reducing drug abuse in America is a priority of mine today, and it will be a priority of mine so long as I'm fortunate enough to hold this high office.

I have picked a good man in John Walters to lead this effort. He's got a lot of experience. He understands the need to reduce demand. He understands the intricacies of interdicting supplies that come into the country. He has been in this office before, working with Bill Bennett. But like me, he is tenacious and focused. Like me, he is dedicated to the single proposition of reducing demand in America. And I look forward to working with John. John's going to find that with this President, when called upon, I'll act. If he says this is a program that needs a boost or a thank, I'll be there, giving a boost or giving the appropriate thanks.

We're here to give thanks to the folks at this program and in this center. So on behalf of the American people and the people of this community, thank you for your hard work, for your love and for your compassion, for your deep concerns about the youth of this country. And thank you all for being here and giving me such a warm welcome.

God bless, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:30 p.m. in the Vienna Community Center. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor M. Jane Seeman of Vienna; Speaker Vance Wilkins, Jr., Virginia House of Delegates; and author William J. Bennett, former Director, Office of National Drug Control Policy. The Vienna-Madison Community Coalition was one of 22 Community Anti-Drug Coalition of America chapters in the Fairfax County Public Schools—Safe and Drug-Free Youth Section.

Remarks Honoring the NCAA Men's Hockey Champion Boston College Eagles

May 10, 2001

Well, thank you all very much. Welcome to the White House. My honor to host you. I know some of the players up here are from Canada. I hope you feel just as welcome in this house as your U.S. counterparts do.

I want to thank Father Leahy for being here. I want to thank the athletic director. Of course, I want to thank Coach York. It's an honor for me to host the mighty Eagles. One of the great benefits of having my job is, I do get to welcome championship teams from all across our country. As a Governor of Texas, the truth of the matter is, I didn't get to welcome a lot of hockey teams. [*Laughter*]

I'm also pleased to see some folks who sometimes think I—on thin ice. [*Laughter*] I think they know who I'm talking about.

Senator Kerry, thank you for being here, sir. I appreciate Representatives Frank and Markey. I appreciate Representative Capuano. I'm glad you all are here. One of the things that happens sometimes in politics is, we disagree. But I think we're learning to disagree in an agreeable way. So you're welcome to the people's house.

I also want to welcome my friend Ambassador Paul Cellucci. I made a good pick when I picked Paul to become the Ambassador to Canada. He, of course, takes credit for the fact that the BC Eagles won the national championship, since he was the Governor at the time.

Also before I turn to the coach, want to remind folks that my sister is a BC Eagle, and proudly so. She's probably wondering why I didn't invite her here today. [*Laughter*]

This is a great place to honor champs. It's also a great place to play sports. We've got a basketball court here. There's a bowling alley. There is a swimming pool. Recently, there was a baseball yard for a teeball game. I asked them why there's no hockey rink, and the truth of the matter is, Coach, there's no place to park the Zamboni. [*Laughter*]

But I do want to congratulate you all for a great victory and a great championship. I know your win over North Dakota was a tough win. But I want to quote what one of your players said, Mark McLennan. Where are you, Mark? He said this about the team: "There were no egos on this team. We had great individual players, but nothing was bigger than the team." And that's why you're the champs. I want to congratulate you all for being champs.

I want to remind you that life is more than just being champs on the ice. It's important to be a champ off the ice, as well. I'm sure there's some little kid up there in the Boston area wondering how a champ behaves off the ice, and you have the responsibility as a champion to set the right example.

Coach, welcome to the White House. Congratulations for being here.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:10 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. William P. Leahy, S.J., president, Jeremiah F. York, hockey coach, and Eugene B. DeFilippo, athletic director, Boston College; and Dorothy Bush Koch, the President's sister.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting an Outline of the 2001 Legislative Agenda for International Trade

May 10, 2001

Dear _____ *:*

I am pleased to provide you with an outline of my 2001 legislative agenda for international trade. I look forward to working closely with you to enact it this year.

The trade agenda reflects my strong commitment to open markets around the world for the benefit of American workers, farmers, and businesses. I also am committed to open markets to provide lower prices and greater choices for U.S. consumers and industries. Open trade fuels the engine of economic growth that creates new jobs and new income in the United States and around the world.

We have no time to waste in reasserting America's leadership on trade. The President has not had trade negotiating authority since it expired in 1994. We can no longer afford to sit still while our trading partners move ahead without us.

For that reason, I have placed the enactment of U.S. Trade Promotion Authority at the top of my trade legislative agenda. U.S. Trade Promotion Authority tells the world that the President and the Congress are united at the negotiating table in seeking to strike the best possible deals for our country. I am committed to working with the Congress, on a bipartisan basis, to rebuild the consensus needed to allow America to reassert its leadership in the trade arena. I hope the enclosed framework for U.S. Trade Promotion Authority will help us redouble our efforts to secure the benefits of expanded trade for the American people.

I hope you also will join me in moving the other important components of my trade legislative agenda to enactment this session as well.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader; Trent Lott, Senate majority leader; Thomas A. Daschle, Senate minority leader; Richard G. Lugar, chairman, and Tom Harkin, ranking member, Senate Committee on Agriculture; Charles E. Grassley, chairman, and Max Baucus, ranking member, Senate Committee on Finance; Orrin G. Hatch, chairman, Senate Committee on the Judiciary; Larry Combest, chairman, and Charles W. Stenholm, ranking member, House Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry; Philip M. Crane, chairman, and Sander M. Levin, ranking member, House Subcommittee on Trade; and William M. Thomas, chairman, and Charles B. Rangel, ranking member, House Committee on Ways and Means.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria and United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan
May 11, 2001

Global AIDS and Health Fund

President Bush. It is my honor to welcome our friend the President of Nigeria to the Rose Garden. Mr. President, welcome to Washington, the Rose Garden. And of course, Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Secretary-General, thank you for coming.

As well, we are joined by two members of my Cabinet, Secretary of State Powell, Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson. I want to thank them both for being here. Scott Evertz, who is the Director of the National AIDS Policy Office, is with us—Scott, thank you for being here; and of course, Condoleezza Rice, the National Security Adviser.

I am looking forward to meeting with the President on a range of issues that are important to our nations. This morning we've spoken about another matter that involves countless lives. Together we've been discussing a strategy to halt the spread of AIDS and other infectious diseases across the African Continent and across the world.

The devastation across the globe left by AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, the sheer number of those infected and dying is almost beyond comprehension. Suffering on the African Continent has been especially great. AIDS alone has left at least 11 million orphans in sub-Sahara Africa. In several African countries, as many as half of today's 15-year-olds could die of AIDS. In a part of the world where so many have suffered from war and want and famine, these latest tribulations are the cruelest of fates.

We have the power to help. The United States is committed to working with other nations to reduce suffering and to spare lives, and working together is the key. Only through sustained and focused international cooperation can we address problems so grave and suffering so great.

My guests today have been doing their part and more, and I thank them for their leadership. President Obasanjo last month led the nations of Africa in drafting the Abuja declaration which lays out crucial guidelines for the international effort we all envision. Secretary-General Annan, too, has made this issue an urgent priority. He has been an eloquent voice in rallying the resources and conviction needed in this cause. When he visited the White House in March, we talked about the AIDS pandemic. We agreed on the goal of creating a global fund to fight HIV/AIDS, malaria,

and tuberculosis. The G–8 has been discussing the potential fund.

Our high-level task force chaired by Secretaries Powell and Thompson has developed a proposal that we have shared with U.N. officials, developing nations, and our G–8 partners. We will need ideas from all sources. We must all show leadership and all share responsibility.

For our part, I am today committing the United States of America to support a new worldwide fund with a founding contribution of $200 million. This is in addition to the billions we spend on research and to the $760 million we're spending this year to help the international effort to fight AIDS. This $200 million will go exclusively to a global fund, with more to follow as we learn where our support can be most effective.

Based on this morning's meetings, I believe a consensus is forming on the basic elements that must shape the global fund and its use. First, we agree on the need for partnerships across borders and among both the public and private sectors. We must call upon the compassion, energy, and generosity of people everywhere. This means that not only governments can help but also private corporations, foundations, faith-based groups, and nongovernmental organizations, as well.

Second, we agree on an integrated approach that emphasizes prevention and training of medical personnel as well as treatment and care. Prevention is indispensable to any strategy of controlling a pandemic such as we now face.

Third, we must concentrate our efforts on programs that work, proven best practices. Whenever the global fund supports any health program, we must know that it meets certain essential criteria. We must know that the money is well spent, victims are well cared for, and local populations are well served.

That leads to the fourth criterion, namely that all proposals must be reviewed for effectiveness by medical and public health experts. Addressing a plague of this magnitude requires scientific accountability to ensure results.

And finally, we understand the importance of innovation in creating lifesaving medicines that combat diseases. That's why we believe the fund must respect intellectual property rights as an incentive for vital research and development.

This morning we have made a good beginning. I expect the upcoming U.N. Special Session and this summer's G–8 summit in Italy to turn these ideas into reality. This is one of those moments that reminds us all in public service why we're here. It challenges us to act wisely and act together and to act quickly. Across the world at this moment, there are people in true desperation, and we must help.

It is now my honor to bring to the podium the President of Nigeria. Mr. President.

President Obasanjo. Mr. President, Secretary-General of the U.N. I am particularly grateful to you, President Bush, for making this ceremony to coincide with my visit to you here at the White House in Washington, DC, on your very kind invitation.

When African leaders gathered in Abuja 2 weeks ago to indicate their unflinching commitment to fight the scourge of HIV/AIDS and related diseases, the joint message of the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Health was brought to us as a message of hope from the United States of America. Today, Mr. President, you have begun to concretize that hope for Africa and particularly for millions of Africans infected and affected by HIV/AIDS.

We are still far from the $7 billion to $8 billion annually that experts reckon will be needed to make impression on the ravaging effects of this dreadful scourge. But with this beginning, and just the beginning as you have kindly emphasized, for the U.S., all nations, governments, foundations, private individuals, and private sector and, indeed, all humankind who are stakeholders in the health of humanity are challenged

and called upon to make contributions to the global trust fund for HIV/AIDS and related diseases.

Mr. President, I thank you, on behalf of all AIDS sufferers in the world, but particularly on behalf of all AIDS sufferers in Africa, for launching the global fight against HIV/AIDS pandemic.

President Bush. Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you very much.

Mr. Secretary-General.

Secretary-General Annan. President Bush, President Obasanjo. I wish to thank you, President Bush, for committing yourself today to placing the United States at the forefront of the global fight against HIV/AIDS. It is a visionary decision that reflects your Nation's natural leadership in the United Nations, as well as your recognition of the threat posed by this global catastrophe.

To defeat this epidemic that haunts humanity and to give hope to the millions infected with the virus, we need a response that matches the challenge. We should now build on the remarkable progress over the last year in galvanizing global awareness of the threat of HIV/AIDS.

I believe we can all agree on five key objectives for our response: First, to ensure that people everywhere, particularly young people, know what to do to avoid infection; second, to stop perhaps the most tragic form of HIV transmission, from mother to child; third, to provide treatment for all those infected; fourth, to redouble the search for vaccine as well as cure; and fifth, to care for all those whose lives have been devastated by AIDS, particularly the orphans, and there are an estimated 13 million of them worldwide today, and their numbers are growing.

As we declare global war on AIDS, we will need a war chest to fight it. We need to mobilize an additional $7 million to $10 million a year to fight this disease worldwide. The global AIDS and health fund that I have called for as part of this total effort would be open to the nations, as you heard from the two Presidents, from governments, civil society, private sector, foundations, and individuals—all hands on deck. And the resources provided must be over and above what is being spent today on the disease and on development assistance to poor countries.

This founding contribution by the U.S., with the promise to do more, will encourage or energize others to act. Africa, of course, is the continent that is most profoundly affected by the spread of HIV/AIDS, and the continent most in need of hope for a better future.

The peoples and the leaders of the continent are rising to the challenge, as President Obasanjo showed most recently by hosting the Abuja AIDS Summit. However, we must not forget that other parts of the world, from the Caribbean to Asia to Eastern Europe, are also confronting the spread of this virus and need urgent assistance.

Mr. President, it is my hope that your commitment today will set an example for other leaders. When we meet at the General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS on the 25th of June in New York City, there will be a strong support for the Global AIDS and Health Fund. As that happens, I believe today will be remembered as the day we began to turn the tide.

Thank you very much.

President Bush. It has been my honor to host this very important announcement. It's also my honor to recognize two Members of the United States Congress who are going to work with this administration to make sure that our commitment becomes reality, Senator Frist and Senator Leahy. We're so thrilled you're here. We appreciate your vision, and we appreciate your leadership.

Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:10 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria
May 11, 2001

President Bush. We just concluded a series of discussions, and a good lunch, with the delegation from Nigeria. The President and I also had some private time to visit about issues of mutual concern. I am—we discussed issues such as trade, the environment. Obviously, we discussed health issues that relate to the continent of Africa.

We are very supportive of the President's initiatives to provide peacekeepers in troubled countries on the African Continent. As many Americans may know, that we are in the process of helping provide technical assistance to Nigerian troops so that they are better able to keep those peace missions. We talked about the program. We've completed two phases of the training. We're in the process of completing the third phase of an agreed-upon training program.

The short of it is that Nigeria is a friend of America, and the President is a friend of mine. It has been my honor to welcome him here. I look forward to working with him in the future.

Mr. President.

President Obasanjo. Thank you very much, sir. I want to take this opportunity to thank President Bush for the invitation to visit the United States of America at this particular time and to be able to establish our relationship and, at the same time, be able to cover the important area, ground—of important areas of bilateral relations, of areas of concern in our subregion of west Africa, areas of concern in Africa, particularly areas of—that are ravaged by war and conflict, such as Angola, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone, and so on. And what we are doing in these areas, we briefed the President. And of course, we have the support of the Government of the United States in our peacekeeping and conflict resolution efforts in Africa.

We discussed other issues that are of importance to us. We discussed the MAP, the Millennium African Plan, which initially was originated by President Thabo Mbeki, President Bouteflika, and myself, and which now has been extended to take on Egypt—President Mubarak, and President Wade of Senegal.

We also look at issues that have been on the table before and that we are working together on, for instance, how do we prepare our troops for these increasing peacekeeping roles in Africa, and the assistance that we have got in the past from the U.S. Government, for which we are very grateful and which we believe will continue to really make our troops to be able to perform adequately in peacekeeping roles.

We, of course, reiterate the friendship and the cordiality between Nigeria and the United States. And of course, I am happy to be able to make a friend of President Bush, just as you heard that President Bush had made a friend of me. I now can feel that if there is any need to call on President Bush, he knows what I look like. [*Laughter*] I am not a no-person to him. He knows how I smile. He may even be feeling how I look on telephone. [*Laughter*]

And that is one important thing, that we made contact. We established a relationship, and we are friends.

Thank you very much.

President Bush. Mr. President, thank you very much. It's an honor for you to be here.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:01 p.m. at the South Portico at the White House. President Obasanjo referred to President Thabo

Mbeki of South Africa; President Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria; President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt; and President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal.

The President's News Conference
May 11, 2001

The President. Good afternoon. First, let me begin by talking about how pleased I am that a budget has been agreed upon. And it's now time for the Congress to act quickly. It's time for the Congress to pass meaningful, real tax reform, and I urge them to do so before Memorial Day. Tax relief will be good for our economy, but tax relief is also a very important way to help deal with high energy prices. And so the Congress needs to act. I'm confident if they have the will to do so, that they can, that they can get this done before Memorial Day.

And secondly, I believe strongly that the Attorney General made the right decision today. Any time we're preparing to carry out the death penalty, we have a solemn obligation to make sure that the case has been handled in full accordance with all the guarantees of our Constitution. The very foundations of our democracy depend on our ability to assure our citizens that in all criminal cases, and especially in the death penalty, defendants have been treated fairly. This decision is going to create some frustration amongst people whose lives were destroyed and turned upside-down by Mr. McVeigh. But it is very important for our country to make sure that in death penalty cases, people are treated fairly.

I'll be glad to answer some questions, starting with Mr. Fournier [Ron Fournier, Associated Press].

Timothy McVeigh

Q. Mr. President, thank you, sir. Attorney General Ashcroft, on the topic you were just talking about, said, "There is no doubt in my mind, or anyone's mind, about the death of Timothy McVeigh." First, as someone who signed 152 death warrants in Texas, do you agree that there is no doubt that McVeigh is guilty? And secondly, did Louis Freeh know about these documents when he tendered his resignation?

The President. Mr. Freeh, Director Freeh never brought this up to me. I found out about this last evening. My conversation with Mr. Freeh, when he came and said he was leaving—the subject never came up.

Secondly, Mr. McVeigh himself has admitted to the crime. Mr. McVeigh, as I recall, said he did it, and I take him for his word.

Q. Mr. President?

The President. Actually, I've been given an order. You're second, Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Gasoline Prices

Q. Mr. President, thank you very much, sir. A lot of families are struggling to pay for gasoline at record prices. What can you do to help them in the short term? Will your energy report address that? And do you agree with your Energy Secretary that OPEC bears some responsibility for these prices?

The President. The price of crude oil has got something to do with the price of gasoline, but not nearly as much as the fact that we haven't built a refinery in years. What this Nation needs to do is to build more refining capacity. And we're prepared to work with the industry to encourage capital development, capital to be deployed to develop more refining capacity. And that

may require us to analyze all regulations that discourage development.

But the best way to make sure that people are able to deal with high energy prices is to cut taxes, is to give people more of their own money so they can meet the bills, so they can meet the high energy prices.

I'm not so sure you're it next. Gregory [David Gregory, NBC News]. You're soon.

Q. Mr. President, can I follow up on that point?

The President. Yes.

Q. Your party in the past has argued in favor of either suspending or rolling back the Federal gasoline tax. Will you consider doing either? And secondly, what would you say to American families who may pay as much as $3 at the pump this summer, at the same time that oil companies in this country are experiencing and enjoying record profits?

The President. What I say is, I worry about the fact that hard-working people are paying high prices at the pump. It concerns me a lot. And therefore, the Congress needs to cut taxes as quickly as possible to give people money to be able to deal with this situation.

I also say, we need to build more refining capacity. We need more supply. We need to meet the increasing demands with better supply. I'm optimistic, in the long term, not only will we increase supplies but that our automobiles will become more technologically adept at dealing with the energy situation now. In other words, we'll have new types of automobiles, hybrids. And in the energy plan I'm going to be discussing, you'll see some incentives for hybrid automobiles. But the quickest way to get money in people's pockets to deal with prices is tax relief.

Bill Plante [CBS News].

Q. Mr. President, are you really going to let Republicans in Congress go home for the next recess without some kind of other short-term relief? You know the Democrats are after you and the Vice President, saying you're a couple of former oil men protecting the industry. Would you at least support the Republican bill in the House which would ease some emission standards in California?

The President. Back to David's question, I'll listen to everybody's suggestions. But I want to remind the Members of Congress, both Republican and Democrat, all of us are concerned about high energy prices and prices at the gas pump being too high. Let's get the tax relief done and do it quickly.

I hope there is no intention to delay. There needs to be money in the pockets of our consumers as quickly as possible. We've got the wherewithal to do so. But as to suggestions, I'm open minded for any suggestions somebody may have.

Q. What about that emissions——

The President. I'll look at all options. But the clearest way to get things done quickly is tax relief.

Now, the American people have got to understand that this is a situation that's going to require some long-term planning to get the situation in hand for the—to have a stable future. There is no such thing as immediate supply. This is a situation that's been developing over the years, and it's going to take a while to correct.

The quickest way to help people with their energy bills is tax relief. That is the quickest, surest way to do so.

Q. All options, including the gas tax, sir?

The President. If anybody thinks they've got a good idea, I'll listen. But for certain, what needs to happen is additional refining capacity, as well as tax relief.

Yes, Terry [Terry Moran, ABC News].

Death Penalty

Q. Mr. President, 51 percent of the American people now, according to a recent poll, support a moratorium on executions; and support for the penalty in general has dropped considerably over the past couple years. Does what happened in the McVeigh case, coupled with the more than 75 people now who have been released

from death row when evidence of their actual innocence came to light, does all of that lead you to reflect at all on the fairness and the accuracy of the death penalty and the way it's actually administered day to day?

The President. Well, I am pleased to be able to report, as for the first case that came to my desk at the Federal Government, that my administration is going to take its time to make sure that justice has been administered fairly.

Q. But do you reflect at all on the general accuracy and fairness of the death penalty, and the way it actually works day to day?

The President. As Mr. Fournier brought up, I was the Governor of a State that had a death penalty, and as far as I was concerned, I reviewed every case, and I was confident that every person that had been put to death received full rights and was guilty of the crime charged.

Q. So no second thoughts about the death penalty?

The President. Not as far as I'm concerned, so long as the system provides fairness. And today is an example of the system being fair.

Major [Major Garrett, Cable News Network].

Gasoline Prices

Q. Mr. President, on the question of repealing the gas tax, even some Republicans have questioned the leadership and the clarity of voice from this White House about what they should do. I've talked to several Republican leaders who have said the White House has said, "Look, if you can figure out a way to pass it, we'll say it's okay, but we're not going to propose it." And what they say is, "If the White House would say they're for it, it would be easier for us to pass it." Can you tell the American people right now——

The President. Major, I can tell—let me say it again, see if I can be more clear. To the Congress, who is interested in helping consumers pay high gas prices: Pass the tax relief as quickly as possible. We've set aside $100 billion to help consumers with high energy prices. That's the quickest way to help consumers. I am deeply concerned about consumers. I am deeply concerned about high gas prices. To anybody who wants to figure out how to help the consumers: Pass the tax relief package as quickly as possible.

Jim [Jim Angle, FOX News].

Federal Bureau of Investigation

Q. Mr. President, there are a number of people, including Senator Leahy, who was here today, who are suggesting that there needs to be much tighter oversight of the FBI. Aside from the McVeigh matter, there have been a number of things over the years—the FBI labs, the Hanssen case, and a number of other things. Do you believe it's time for a more sweeping look at what is going on at the FBI?

The President. There are two looks at what's happening in the FBI. One, of course, is the commission that Louis Freeh put together, headed by Judge Webster. I'm confident that that commission will take a full look at the proceedings within the FBI, as to regards to security matters.

And secondly, the Attorney General is going to be conducting an investigation as to why the documents were not given to Mr. McVeigh's lawyers. And I look forward to seeing what those findings reveal.

Yes, ma'am.

Energy Resources

Q. Mr. President, to follow up on energy. You're developing closer relations with Nigeria, Mexico, and Canada. Could you use your leverage with these countries to have them convince Saudi Arabia to open the spigots and provide more fuel?

The President. The reason why we have a problem at the gas pump at this particular moment in history is because we haven't built any refining capacity. When you don't increase supplies of a commodity

and demand continues to increase, the price is going to go up. And so our Nation must expand refining capacity. And we've got to do that within our hemisphere. Otherwise, when you transport refined product from far distances, it doesn't meet market tests. So we need more refining capacity.

I am working with Canada and Mexico to increase the supply, particularly of natural gas. We have a serious situation in the State of California, as you're very aware. We've been working with the officials of California to expedite the development of new electric generating capacity. We're also doing our part as a good citizen to reduce demand for electricity in peak hours. But the new plants that are being brought on stream in California are going to be driven by natural gas. And we need more natural gas to make sure there is fuel for those plants. So I am working with Mexico and I am working with Canada to try to figure out ways for us to encourage exploration in our own neighborhood.

I had a good discussion today with the President of Nigeria, who is talking about increasing their amount of production, coming from Nigeria. That is positive news for U.S. consumers. The more supply on the market, the lower—the less pressure there will be on price.

Ron [Ron Hutcheson, Knight Ridder].

National Economy

Q. Given what's going on with energy prices and the difficulties in the economy, can you assure the American people at the start of your term that they'll be better off at the end of it than they are today? And if they're not, should they blame you?

The President. Well, I certainly hope they're better off. There's no question that the minute I got elected, the storm clouds on the horizon were getting nearly directly overhead. In other words, the economic news started to deteriorate.

The truth of the matter is, the market started to adjust March of last year. In other words, the so-called downturn has been in the making for a while. I believe with good policy from the Fed, as well as good fiscal policy, that we can recover, that that robust growth we all hope for will come back. I wish I could tell you when. I'm not an economist, but if I were, I'd probably say there's a 50 percent chance it would happen soon and a 50 percent chance it wouldn't.

Q. And if it doesn't work out, does that mean it's not your fault?

The President. Listen, Presidents, whether things are good or bad, get the credit or blame. I understand that.

But Ron, I'm not really that concerned about standing in polls. I am doing what I think is the right thing to do. And the right thing to do is to have proposed a tax relief package that is an integral part of a fiscal policy that makes sense.

I proposed the plan. I campaigned on the plan. Many of you, the truth be known here, didn't actually think it was going to happen. Now there's a budget in place, $1.25 trillion of tax relief, coupled with 100 billion of immediate stimulus that's now available.

If I had my way, I'd have it in place tomorrow, so that people would have money in their pockets to deal with high energy prices, so people would have money in their pockets to be able to plan for the future. The Congress needs to act. I'm confident that that will help an economic recovery.

Q. Mr. President?

The President. Bob [G. Robert Hillman, Dallas Morning News].

Federal Bureau of Investigation Nomination

Q. Sir, how are the recent controversies in the FBI affecting your search for a new Director? Just what kind of person are you looking to head the FBI?

The President. We've just started, Bob. I look forward to seeing what the Webster report says. I look forward to hearing what the Attorney General says about the—about

the reason why Mr. McVeigh's attorneys did not get—did not see certain documents.

And I am looking for somebody who will do a couple of things: One, enforce the law; two, keep morale high at the agency; somebody who is a good manager; and somebody who can work with the Attorney General in my administration.

Q. What's your timetable?

The President. As soon as possible. I'm not sure what that means, though, to be perfectly frank with you. I mean, we're beginning to look at different candidates, and it's a—obviously, it's a process that's going to take a while. Director Freeh assured me that the number two person there could do a good job if we took us a while to find a replacement.

Glen [Glen Johnson, Boston Globe].

Timothy McVeigh

Q. Mr. President, some of those who have interviewed Tim McVeigh say that he will actually revel in what happened today——

The President. Really?

Q. ——that it will be a sign of FBI incompetence. What message should he take from this whole episode, in your mind?

The President. He should say—he's lucky to be in America, is what he ought to say; that this is a country who will bend over backwards to make sure that his constitutional rights are guaranteed; that as opposed to rushing his fate, that the Attorney General, with my strong support, said we better make sure that all guarantees are fulfilled. Mr. McVeigh is lucky to be in a country like this.

It's unfortunate that he would feel like reveling at all after what he supposedly has done. There are a lot of people's lives he affected; there are a lot of people in Oklahoma City—I went to the memorial. I got to see the faces of people, the pictures of people whose lives were lost. I talked to relatives who still weep when they think about a relative. This isn't a time to revel.

Yes, Bruni [Frank Bruni, New York Times].

Q. But to follow up on that, what will those relatives, what will those families of victims gain? What will—how will they benefit from Timothy McVeigh's execution?

The President. Frank, you need to talk to them about that.

Q. In your opinion.

The President. Well, I can't possibly put myself in their stead.

Q. Why is his execution so important and the death penalty so important, then?

The President. Because it needs to send a signal to anybody who thinks what Timothy McVeigh did was okay, that in this society we're not going to tolerate that kind of heinous act.

But you need to talk to the—all I can tell you is, I'm sure there's going to be some frustration by the family members about a decision that the Attorney General made, supported by me. I'm sure there will be, and we'll probably hear from them. But they must understand that we live in a country that protects certain rights. And the Attorney General did the right thing in this decision.

Mike [Mike Allen, Washington Post].

U.S. Citizens Held in China

Q. Mr. President, what is your level of concern about U.S. citizens who remain held in China, and what are you doing for them?

The President. We've sent clear signals to the Chinese that we expect our citizens that have been detained, and/or citizens who have been detained with U.S. relatives, that we expect them to be treated fairly. And we'd like for them to have whatever due process the Chinese can offer. We have expressed our concerns. Sometimes they listen; sometimes they don't.

Our relations with China are relations that are going to be based upon a consistent message with the Chinese: One, we expect there to be trade, and I hope there is trade; but two, that we expect people

to be treated fairly inside that country. And hopefully they'll respond.

Federal Bureau of Investigation

Q. Mr. President, is your confidence in the FBI undermined by this episode?

The President. I'm obviously concerned about an incident where documents have been misplaced. But I withhold judgment until I find out the full facts, to find out what the Attorney General's investigation finds out.

Martha [Martha Brant, Newsweek].

American Justice System

Q. Mr. President, following up on that, do you think our American justice system is healthy, or does it need fixing?

The President. I think, by and large, the system is healthy. And I think today proved why it is healthy, that ours is a Government that when found that documents hadn't been given to the defense attorney, even though those documents reviewed by our own—by our—Justice Department lawyers didn't feel like it was going to make the—change the verdict. But we delayed until Mr. McVeigh's attorneys have a chance to look at the documents.

Death Penalty

Q. Mr. President, if I can follow up. You know that those documents could have been discovered days after Timothy McVeigh had been executed. You also know that there is some concern about a forensic scientist in Oklahoma City who was involved in a number of death penalty cases, a number of——

The President. Say that again on the forensic scientist?

Q. ——in Oklahoma City, who was involved in a number of death penalty cases. Those inmates happened to be executed. What can you say to the American people——

The President. Well, in this case——

Q. Let me just finish.

The President. Okay, I'm sorry. I beg your pardon. [*Laughter*]

Q. Thank you, sir. [*Laughter*]

What can you say or what can you do as President to ensure that at the Federal, State level, the death penalty is always administered fairly?

The President. Well, at the State level, I encourage Governors to be diligent and to look at all the facts and to make sure that people get full access to the courts and that there is no question about the person's guilt.

At the Federal level, I'm pleased to report that on the first case that came toward my desk, my administration reacted the way it should have, which is, given the fact that documents had been misplaced, the Attorney General recommended the delay of the execution until the—Mr. McVeigh's rights were fully vetted; in other words, his lawyers have a chance to look at those documents. It was the right thing to do.

And you bring up a hypothetical, but that's not the way it happened. The way it happened was that the evidence was brought forth, and we made a decision, and it was the correct decision.

Yes, sir.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. Mr. President, you would not equate the baby that was killed in retaliatory Israeli fire in the Gaza Strip with the 13- and 14-year-old Jewish boys, one of them a U.S. citizen, who were tied up, beaten to death, and mutilated near Tekoa, would you?

The President. I was kind of smiling—it sounded kind of like an editorial.

But the death in the Middle East is abhorrent, and our Nation weeps when people lose their lives. And what we must do is work hard to break the cycle of violence. It's going to be very difficult for us to be able to bring people to the peace table so long as there is violence. And we will continue to work to break the cycle of violence.

Tommy [Thomas M. DeFrank, New York Daily News].

United Nations Human Rights Commission

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Did you speak to Secretary-General Annan this morning about the United Nations vote to kick the U.S. off the Human Rights Commission? And if so, what did you tell him?

The President. I did. I told him it was hard for me to envision a Human Rights Commission without the United States on it—and Sudan being on it, let me put it that way. We're off, and Sudan is on. I'm not so sure—you know, that sent an awfully, awfully strange signal to the world, it seems like to me.

Yes.

Q. A followup. Did you—or do you believe that some U.S. back dues to the United Nations should be withheld as a result of that vote, as some in Congress were asking?

The President. I do not. I think we have made an agreement with the United Nations, an agreement that had been negotiated in good faith, and I think we ought to pay our dues.

Having said that, the decision was an outrageous decision. To me, it undermines the whole credibility of this Commission—to kick the United States off, one of the great bastions of human rights, and allow Sudan to be on. And I think most reasonable people in the world see it that way.

But I did bring up the subject. Thank you for pinning me.

Q. Did he agree?

The President. He listened carefully.

Yes, sir.

Energy Policy

Q. Another energy question, if I may, Mr. President.

The President. Please.

Q. What would you tell an American citizen who is suspicious that your energy policy is going to benefit the oil industry, because of your background and Vice President Cheney's background in the industry?

The President. I would tell the American people I'm going to tell the truth when it comes to energy, that we have a serious problem, that we need to do a couple of things. One, we need to encourage the development of technologies to help us conserve. We need to be more conservation minded in America. But I'm also going to say, as plainly as I can, we won't conserve our way to energy independence. We must also increase supply. It's in the consumer's interests that we do so. The more supply there is, relative to demand, the less the price will be. And I believe that we can have exploration and sound environmental policy go hand in hand.

The only thing I know to do, sir, is to tell the truth the way I see it. And we can play like there's not an energy crisis or hope there's not a problem. There is a problem, and there's a problem that's going to confront this Nation. And my job as the President is to take the problem on and propose the solutions I think necessary to solve the problem. And again, I repeat, it's a combination of good conservation and an increase in supplies. And I believe we can do both. And so—I think most of the American people understand that. Thank you.

Yes.

Japan

Q. Mr. President, Japan's new Prime Minister, Junichiro Koizumi, has accepted your invitation to visit the United States as early as possible. He now enjoys very good support of more than 80 percent, mainly to his strong commitment to economic reforms in Japan.

The President. Yes.

Q. Mr. President, now are you more optimistic about the future of the second largest economy of the world, or are you still very concerned?

The President. Well, I am concerned, but I am optimistic when I read what the

Prime Minister has said about reforms. Now, I believe he's a man who is intent upon reforming the system. I had a good visit with him on the telephone. I look forward to meeting him in person. I look forward to discussing ways in which our important friendship can remain strong. And I look forward to hearing from him what he and his government intend to do to reform the system.

Japan is a very important partner of the United States. And it's not only an economic partner, but it's an important partner to keep stability in the Far East. It's important for us to work closely together, and I look forward to meeting him soon. And I'm confident we'll have a very good dialog when I'm able to do so.

Thank you all very much. Have a very good weekend.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 2:04 p.m. in the James S. Brady Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan; Judge William H. Webster, former Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, who led the espionage investigation of Special Agent Robert Philip Hanssen; and President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria.

The President's Radio Address
May 12, 2001

Good morning. I wish every mother listening a happy Mother's Day, including my own. And I want to remind every daughter and every son to tell Mom first thing tomorrow how much you love her.

Today I want to talk about how we can meet some of our energy needs through a new kind of conservation, a 21st century conservation that saves power through technological innovation. We are near the beginning of the summer driving and air conditioning season, the months of the year when energy use rises and energy prices jump. This year, like last year, gasoline and electricity prices are rising sharply, squeezing family budgets, and disrupting the lives and work of our fellow Americans. Energy is a problem that my administration will address.

This week we will introduce a comprehensive energy plan to help bring new supplies of energy to the market, and we will be encouraging Americans to use more wisely the energy supplies that exist today.

I am very concerned about the possibility of blackouts in California this summer. My administration will do our part to help by cutting peak hour energy use at Federal facilities in California. Military installations will reduce their peak hour use by 10 percent. Civilian buildings will raise their thermostats and turn off escalators and other nonessential equipment. These are immediate measures to help with an immediate problem, and I applaud the many Californians and Americans who are finding their own ways to use less energy this summer.

Over the long term, the most effective way to conserve energy is by using energy more efficiently. For example, a new refrigerator uses 65 percent less power than a refrigerator built in 1972. Overall, we use 40 percent less energy to produce new goods and services than we did in 1973.

Some think that conservation means doing without. That does not have to be the case. It can mean building sensors into new buildings to shut the lights off as soon as people leave a room. It can mean upgrading the transmission lines that deliver electricity to your home so less is wasted on the way. It can mean encouraging

homeowners to invest in energy improvements.

Twenty-first century conservation harnesses new technology to squeeze as much out of a barrel of oil as we have learned to squeeze out of a computer chip. We can raise our standard of living wisely and in harmony with our environment.

Pushing conservation forward will require investment in new energy technology, and that will be a part of my administration's energy plan. Conservation will require improving appliance standards. That will also be a part of the plan. And conservation will require new incentives to encourage industry to replace outdated equipment. That will be a part of the plan, as well.

But conservation will require one more thing, something that cannot be written into any plan: the problem-solving spirit of the American scientist and the American entrepreneur. My administration will take their side as they conserve and expand our energy supply for the benefit of all Americans.

Thank you very much for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9 a.m. on May 11 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 12. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary at 7 a.m. on May 12 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address. The Mother's Day proclamation of May 9 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks Announcing the Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

May 14, 2001

Thank you. You're still the man, Mr. Mayor. [*Laughter*] It's an honor to be introduced by the mayor. One of the reasons why I asked him to sit next to Laura during my State of the Union Address—or state of the budget address, I guess—is because of the fantastic work the mayor has done with faith-based programs in Philadelphia. He understands that government is limited. We can spend money, but what government cannot do is put hope into hearts of our fellow citizens. And Mr. Mayor, I appreciate your leadership, and I'm honored that you would welcome me to this great city.

I was thinking, coming in, that had things worked out differently, Philadelphia could have been the Nation's Capital, and I would have been calling you neighbor. And we would have had a baseball team in the Nation's Capital, and it would have been a pretty good one, too. [*Laughter*]

I'm honored to be traveling with the Attorney General, who I'll introduce in a minute. It's a great honor to be with the senior Senator from the State of Pennsylvania—that's Arlen Specter—as well as the junior Senator, Rick Santorum. Thank you both for being here.

And we've got members of the congressional delegation here as well, Weldon, Hoeffel, and Toomey. I want to thank you guys for coming. We're flying back on Air Force One; I look forward to listening to what you need to tell me. I probably won't do it, but nevertheless, I look forward to listening. [*Laughter*]

I'm honored to be here with the Lieutenant Governor and the attorney general of the great State of Pennsylvania. I'm sorry my close friend the Governor, who's not here—but I understand he's trying to drum up some business for the State of Pennsylvania, so he's got an excused absence.

It's such an honor to be here with leaders of the national law organizations, such as my friend Gil Gallegos from the State of New Mexico, who is the president of the Fraternal Order of Police. Thank you for being here, Gil, as well as the other leaders.

And most importantly, it's an honor to be here with the men and women who wear the blue, and I want to thank you for your service to your community and to your Nation. And like the mayor, I congratulate those officers who were promoted to corporal. It's a well-deserved honor, and it's fitting that it come on National Police Week. I want to express my appreciation to all in this city who are involved with law enforcement, and thank you for your skill and your dedication and, most importantly, your bravery on behalf of your fellow citizens.

During the last several years, violent crime in America has been decreasing, and all Americans are grateful. Between 1989 and 1999 the violent crime rate dropped 20 percent. And that's a huge accomplishment. It really is. But unfortunately, American society is still far too violent. The violent crime rate in the United States remains among the highest in the industrialized world.

Nationally there were 12,658 murders in 1999, two-thirds of which were shooting deaths. And for every fatal shooting, there were roughly three nonfatal shootings. And folks, this is unacceptable in America. It's just unacceptable, and we're going to do something about it.

Like most major urban centers—cities—in America, Philadelphia suffered from a stunning rise in violent crime. However, Philadelphia, as the mayor mentioned, has made great progress. For example, in 1990 there were 500 murders; last year there were 319. And the mayor deserves a lot of credit; so does the police commissioner and the police men and women of Philadelphia. And for that, we're incredibly grateful. And we're grateful for programs such as Operation Sunrise and Safe & Sound and Youth Violence Reduction Project, which, Mr. Mayor, is making your city more safe and more secure for all of the citizens.

But gun violence is still a serious problem. Three out of four murder victims in this city are shot to death with handguns. Among young victims, that figure rises to almost 9 out of 10. In America today, a teenager is more likely to die from a gunshot than from all natural causes of death combined. These details have caused too many families to bury the next generation. And for all our children's sake, this Nation must reclaim our neighborhoods and our streets.

We need a national strategy to assure that every community is attacking gun violence with focus and intensity. I'm here today to announce a national initiative to help cities like Philadelphia fight gun violence. The program I propose we call Project Safe Neighborhoods will establish a network of law enforcement and community initiatives targeted at gun violence. It will involve an unprecedented partnership between all levels of government. It will increase accountability within our systems. And it will send an unmistakable message: If you use a gun illegally, you will do hard time.

This Nation must enforce the gun laws which exist on the books. Project Safe Neighborhoods incorporates and builds upon the success of existing programs. In Richmond, Virginia, for example, during the first year of what's called Project Exile, homicides were reduced by 40 percent and armed robberies were reduced by 30 percent, in the first year alone. And thanks to Boston's Operation Cease Fire, in almost 2 years, no one under the age of 17 was shot. These are tremendous success stories and ones that are worth duplicating around our Nation.

My administration is proposing to devote more than $550 million on Project Safe Neighborhoods over the next 2 years. The funding will be used to hire new Federal

and State prosecutors, to support investigators, to provide training, and develop and promote community outreach efforts. All newly appointed United States attorneys will be directed to certify to the Attorney General that the new comprehensive gun violence program has been implemented in their districts. We're going to reduce gun violence in America, and those who commit crimes with guns will find a determined adversary in my administration.

"Domestic tranquility" is a phrase made famous in this city. Project Safe Neighborhoods is one step, and an important step, to making that a reality. And now to explain the program is a fine American, a great Attorney General, John Ashcroft.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:32 a.m. at the Pennsylvania Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor John F. Street of Philadelphia; and Gov. Tom Ridge, Lt. Gov. Mark S. Schweiker, and Attorney General Mike Fisher of Pennsylvania. The Peace Officers Memorial Day and Police Week proclamation of May 8 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks Honoring the 2000 Women's National Basketball Association Champion Houston Comets

May 14, 2001

Well, thank you all for coming. It's my honor to welcome the first Texas team to the White House since I've been fortunate enough to be the President. It seems like it's becoming quite a habit.

Thank you very much, Nancy, for coming. It's my honor to welcome two Texas Congressmen, Ken Bentsen and John Culberson. We welcome you all here, as well. I understand that Val Ackerman is here, and I want to congratulate you for your vision, a true sports entrepreneur who has really put the effort and energy to make the WNBA the success it has been. America owes you a debt of gratitude; particularly, a dad of twins owes you a debt of gratitude—women twins.

I want to thank the coach for coming, as well. It turns out every single championship team that comes to the White House has got a lot of ingredients, but one is a coach that is really good at what he does. So Mr. Coach, congratulations on returning, and I suspect I'll see you here next year.

I love the idea of women's—of heralding women's athletics. And one of the great things about the Comets is that you've proven that you're some of the greatest athletes in the world, but also some of the greatest people in the world. I had the honor of living in the State of Texas when Sheryl was playing for Texas Tech. And I remember how proud we were—and I also remember—when you won the national championship. But I also remember watching you and Cynthia Cooper and other stars, when it comes to character, perform your acts of kindness in our communities around the State of Texas.

I think the WNBA also is—not only showcases athletic talent but it attracts a lot of young fans to see their stars perform. And so I want to thank our young fans who are here today.

I'm also mindful that those of us in positions of responsibility must uphold the responsibility with dignity and class. And this franchise has done that. I know your hard work in the Houston area when it comes to helping people who may have cancer. I know of your work in the neighborhoods around Houston by putting on clinics to teach young men and women what it means to have clean minds and clean bodies. And

for that, I'm grateful. And for that, I welcome you to the White House and congratulate you on being true champs.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:22 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Nancy Alexander, wife of Houston Comets owner Leslie Alexander; Val Ackerman, president, Women's National Basketball Association; and Houston Comets coach Van Chancellor, player Sheryl Swoopes, WNBA 2000 Player of the Year, and retired player Cynthia Cooper.

Remarks at the Peace Officers Memorial Service
May 15, 2001

Thank you all very much. Please be seated. Gil, thank you very much for your friendship and your eloquence. It's my honor to be here. I'm pleased to be joined by three fine members of my Cabinet, General Ashcroft and Secretary O'Neill and Secretary Chao. I thank you all for joining us. I appreciate the Members of the United States Congress being here. Thank you for letting us share these beautiful grounds.

I'm so thankful for the beautiful voices that are here today. Officer Rodriguez, I've heard a lot of national anthems in my day; that was one of the greatest. Thank you very much, sir. Not bad for a New York cop. [*Laughter*] And Billy, thank you very much for sharing your God-given talents with us, as well.

It is an honor to welcome you all here on these beautiful grounds, and it's a honor to be among the people in law enforcement who are here today. And it's a special privilege to be able to say hello and God bless to the many widows and family members of the fallen officers. It's truly my privilege.

As President, I feel a special connection with the officers of the law. I meet many of you as I travel around our country, and of course, on a daily basis I'm surrounded by some of the finest men and women I have ever met in my life.

The same is true for all Americans, but in a less visible way. Everywhere, from the greatest city to the quietest of crossroads in America, there is someone working long, hard hours to protect our citizens; someone who, when we're in trouble, will face a threat in our defense; someone who, when we are in danger, will rush to our aid, even in complete disregard to his or her own safety.

One of the names recorded on the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial is that of Patrolman Mickey Cullinane of Sea Island City, New Jersey. He died trying to rescue a man lying at the bottom of a deep pit. A witness described the obvious dangers at the scene. He recalled everybody said, "You can't go down there." But some people can't see someone in trouble and walk away. Mickey did—he didn't walk away. He did what the courageous do.

In the daily lives of Americans, such moments of emergency are rare, thankfully rare. For most, the violent moments never come at all. And there's a reason for this, and it's simply not good fortune. The reason is you, the officers of the law, your bravery, and the courage you show every day in wearing the uniform.

And it's always been that way. Every generation of Americans has produced men and women willing to stand watch over the rest of us. Every generation has lived under your protection. And we must never take for granted the police officers of America.

We have a solemn obligation to give thanks and credit to law enforcement officers who are no longer with us. We honor, as well, the ones who have so bravely faced

injury and disability. And we're so grateful to those who have retired after honorable careers and, of course, to those who are on the job this very day.

At times, law enforcement must seem like the most thankless work you could ever do. But I'm here to tell you that yours is one of the great callings, and your country thanks you for it.

A Texas State trooper spoke for many last year after a colleague was struck down in the line of duty. America must hear what this man said. He said, "It's a rough thing, and people ask, 'Why do you do it?' It's the profession I chose, and I honestly think good officers are called by God."

For too many officers and their families, that calling has come at the highest price, in lives ended and hopes destroyed. For those who suffer it, this loss can never be measured. But long ago, we were told how to measure the men and women who make this sacrifice: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

Each one of you chose your profession, understanding the risks. This memorial stands as a reminder of those dangers and of how men and women died facing them. For each name, there was a family left behind. We must never forget how suddenly their pain comes and how long it lingers.

The widow of a U.S. marshal said, "Whenever men who spend their lives serving their country are killed in the line of duty, we all lose a piece of ourself. I lost a bigger piece than others."

We cannot today cover the grief or repay the sacrifice, but it is a way, a lasting way, to acknowledge the debt. And that is the best we can do, after others had given all there was to give. America honors their memory today, and we always will.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:36 p.m. on the West Grounds at the Capitol. In his remarks, he referred to Gilbert G. Gallegos, national president, Fraternal Order of Police; Daniel Rodriguez, police officer, New York City Police Department; and country/western singer Billy Gilman. The Peace Officers Memorial Day and Police Week proclamation of May 8 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on Proposed Patients' Bill of Rights Legislation
May 15, 2001

The bipartisan proposal introduced today by Senators Frist, Breaux, and Jeffords makes important progress in our efforts to provide patients with a strong and effective Patients' Bill of Rights.

This bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights reflects the principles I laid out earlier this year. It provides strong patient protections for all Americans, ensures that doctors and patients make medical decisions, and holds health plans accountable by providing patients with meaningful remedies when they have been wrongly denied medical care. The bill also protects employers and their employees from unnecessary litigation that would increase health care premiums and force too many Americans to do without health insurance.

Congress has been long divided over this issue. I applaud Senators Frist, Breaux, and Jeffords and the many patient and provider groups working with them for finding a commonsense compromise.

I am similarly encouraged by the bipartisan discussions on this issue between the administration and Speaker Hastert and

other House leaders. These efforts, combined with the introduction of this bipartisan bill in the Senate, give me great hope that the Congress will send a good Patients' Bill of Rights to my desk this year.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Burma
May 15, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the emergency declared with respect to Burma is to continue in effect beyond May 20, 2001. The most recent notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on May 19, 2000.

As long as the Government of Burma continues its policies of committing large-scale repression of the democratic opposition in Burma, this situation continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force these emergency authorities beyond May 20, 2001.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
May 15, 2001.

NOTE: The notice of May 15 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Burma
May 15, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Burma that was declared in Executive Order 13047 of May 20, 1997.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
May 15, 2001.

Remarks Announcing the United States–Sub-Saharan Africa Trade and Economic Cooperation Forum
May 16, 2001

The President. Thank you all. Please be seated. Welcome to the Rose Garden. It's my honor to share the podium with Representatives Crane and Rangel and our friend from Senegal Ambassador Seck. Thank you very much for being here, sir. I'm so appreciative that our Secretary of State, Colin Powell, has joined us today—Secretary, thank you for being here—and our Secretary of Treasury, Paul O'Neill. They're here for a reason. They're here because they strongly support the initiative about which we are about to speak.

I'm thankful that many Members of the United States Congress are here, Members who worked on this initiative long before I came. I appreciate you all being here. I look forward to working with you to do the right thing for our friends on the continent of Africa. I also want to thank many members of the diplomatic corps who are here. We're so grateful that you took time out of your day to come and share in this moment.

I finally want to thank Hakeem "The Dream" Olajuwon for being here today. He is—I know this isn't the moment to herald Texas sports—[*laughter*]—but thank you for many great moments.

There is good news coming out of the sub-Saharan Africa. Democracy is emerging in countries like Ghana and Nigeria and showing enduring strength in Senegal, Botswana, and South Africa. Free market reforms are delivering real benefits to people in places like Mozambique and Madagascar and Mali. We Americans want to be more than spectators of Africa's progress. We want to encourage a brighter future through policies that nurture and support freedom and democratic reform.

And that's why Congress passed the African Growth and Opportunity Act. There is now a broad consensus that open trade and international investment are the surest and fastest way for Africa to make progress. The act opens American markets to countries that have embarked on the difficult but beneficial path of political and economic reform. These are countries that are moving toward market-based economies and the rule of law, that are lowering trade barriers and strengthening their commercial law, that are combating corruption and eliminating child labor, and that are showing enhanced respect for labor standards and human rights.

Thirty-five sub-Saharan African nations are eligible under AGOA for their commitment to these principles. The principles in the African Growth and Opportunity Act are important for Africa, but they're also important for the United States. Countries that respect markets and the rights of the individual are more likely to grow economically. They are more likely to achieve political stability. They can raise education standards, deliver better health care, and protect their environment. Strong African democracies with strong economies and healthy populations will contribute to a world that is more peaceful and more prosperous for all.

Now, we should take the next step to realize the promise of the African Growth and Opportunity Act. This October the United States will invite the eligible countries to Washington to inaugurate the U.S.–Sub-Saharan African Trade and Economic Cooperation Forum. The Forum will discuss further measures we can take to stimulate trade, to develop prosperity, and to enhance democracy.

I'm today asking and directing the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Treasury, the Commerce Secretary, and the U.S. Trade Representative to issue invitations to

the Forum, to their ministerial counterparts. Secretary Powell may just deliver some of those invitations in person when he travels to the continent later on this year. The United States will also invite representatives of African regional organizations to this Forum. I hope I get to attend, as well.

Sub-Saharan Africa has suffered much from political oppression and inward-looking economic policies. Africans, themselves, now agree that democracy and open trade are the right way forward. The United States wants to engage sub-Saharan African countries as valued economic partners. And we look forward to welcoming sub-Saharan African leaders as our guests next fall.

Thank you all for coming. And it's now my honor to bring to the podium Phil Crane, Congressman from Illinois.

[*At this point, Representatives Philip M. Crane and Charles B. Rangel and Senegalese Ambassador to the United States Mamadou Seck each made brief remarks.*]

The President. Again, I want to thank you all for coming. It is our honor to host many from the diplomatic corps. Welcome to the White House. We look forward to working with you. It's in our best interest that your great continent thrive, and we look forward to working with you to make sure it does so.

God bless. Thank you guys for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:55 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to professional basketball player Hakeem Olajuwon. The U.S.–Sub-Saharan Africa Trade and Economic Cooperation Forum was established by Section 105 of Title I of the Trade and Development Act of 2000 (Public Law 106–200).

Remarks on Receiving the Report of the National Energy Policy Development Group and an Exchange With Reporters
May 16, 2001

The President. Thank you all for coming. Today the Vice President and the National Energy Policy Development Group made their presentation to me and the Cabinet. This is an extensive report. It provides over 100 proposals to diversify and increase the supply of energy, innovative proposals to encourage conservation, and ways to make sure that we get energy from producer to consumer.

I am really pleased with the work the Vice President and his folks did. This is a very optimistic look at America. It's tough, in that it lays out the problems; it's a direct assessment of neglect. But this great Nation of ours, because of our technology, our attitude, our adherence to free enterprise, our willingness to conserve, we're going to solve this problem. And I'm looking forward to making my case to the American people tomorrow and throughout the years.

While there are some—you know, we can't overcome the fact that we haven't built a refinery in years and we should have. We can make sure—we can make sure that any entity will not illegally overcharge. And so I'm calling on the FTC to make sure that nobody in America gets illegally overcharged. And we're going to make sure FERC will monitor electricity suppliers to make sure that they charge rates that are fair and reasonable. The Attorney General and I will work with the FTC.

But I'm upbeat about America, I truly am. I think this is a country that is going

to show the rest of the world how to deal wisely with energy.

Q. Mr. President, let me make it clearer. Are you calling on an FTC and FERC investigation, or are you plainly restating their obligations under the law already?

The President. I am calling on the FTC to take appropriate action anytime there is a complaint against illegal pricing.

Q. Is there any evidence, to your mind, that there is illegal pricing now? Is there a reason for an investigation?

The President. None whatsoever. But should somebody have a complaint, it is the appropriate role of the FTC to look into that complaint.

Q. And you feel the same on FERC, sir? None whatsoever?

The President. Yes, sir, I do.

Q. Thank you.

The President. Well, actually I say that—FERC has made an analysis and has actually rebated money back to people in the State of California; they have already acted on the notion of reasonable pricing. And we expect FERC to continue to do that, to be vigilant on behalf of the American consumer.

Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Q Sir, what can you say to Californians suffering through rolling blackouts? How does your plan help them in the short term?

The President. My plan helps people in the short term and long term by recognizing the problem and by expediting energy development. And what we have done in the State of California is, we've worked very closely with the Governor, to help the Governor permit plants necessary to increase the supply of energy in that big State.

Administrator Whitman and myself and Secretary Abraham heard the call of Governor Davis. He said, "Help us build plants in the State of California," and we did. And we expedited the construction of plants. And so the quicker supply gets on, the easier it's going to be for the consumers in the State of California. And we will continue to listen and work with the Governor of California. We're deeply concerned about the State of California, as we are with the rest of the Nation.

But we haven't had an energy policy. Interestingly enough, this is the first comprehensive energy policy probably ever—certainly in a long time. And I appreciate so very much the hard work. I've told the people of America, if given the chance to be the President, we would address this problem, and we would address it in a comprehensive way.

As I say, there are over 100 recommendations—over 100 proposals. And we're going to get after it. This isn't just a report that's going to gather dust; this is an action plan, because this is an action administration.

Q. Mr. President, how will your plan lead to lower prices at the gas pump now?

The President. Pardon me?

Q. How will it lead to lower prices at the gas pump now?

The President. Because we recognize that we need more supply. And when you read the report, you'll see that we've laid out constructive ways to make sure that there are more supply available.

I will tell you, there are some who advocate price controls. Price controls do not increase supply, nor do they affect demand. And this is an administration that will take a hard look at the problems. And we'll deal straightforward with the American people, with a plan that is optimistic—it is very hopeful. And it's the right thing to do. And I can't wait for the American people to hear the proposals.

It talks about the ingenuity of America. Ours is a great nation. Ours is a nation that can lead the world in innovative conservation measures, and we provide incentives to do that. Ours is a nation that can explore in technologically friendly ways, and we will show the world how to do so.

But we also have got to recognize our infrastructure is old and stale, and so we've

got innovative approaches to be able to move product from one part of the country to another, or natural gas, for example, from outside our borders to inside our borders. And so I look forward to good—folks taking a good look at this, because it makes eminent sense for the future of the country.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:50 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House following a Cabinet meeting. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Gray Davis of California. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Announcing the Energy Plan in St. Paul, Minnesota
May 17, 2001

Thank you. Please be seated. Thank you for that warm welcome. First, I want to thank my friend Norm Coleman. What a great leader he is for St. Paul. He's a very good friend. I think it's important for you all to know that when Norm calls over there to Washington, I'll answer the phone.

Traveling with me today are two of my Cabinet officers: first, from the State of Michigan, the Energy Secretary, Spence Abraham; and the EPA Administrator, Christie Todd Whitman. I appreciate John's invitation to be here, and I want to thank the Capital City Partnership for giving me the chance to come and deliver a major policy address to the Nation.

I'm also pleased to be in the home of the mighty Minnesota Twins. Their cost per win is astounding. [*Laughter*] It serves as a good example of what frugality can do for the Nation. [*Laughter*]

But I'm not here to talk about baseball. The Twin Cities are a great place to discuss America's energy challenge. Minneapolis-St. Paul grew up as a mighty milling and transportation center because of the power of the Mississippi River. Your history was built on energy that was abundant and affordable and reliable. So, too, will be this Nation's energy future. I invite you to think with me about that future.

I had an early look at the future this morning, right here in St. Paul. I toured a plant that harnesses the best of new technology to produce energy that is cleaner and more efficient and more affordable. The plant boils enough water to heat 146 major office buildings in downtown St. Paul. Not a bit of energy is wasted—not even the waste. The excess heat generated as the water boils is captured and used to create steam, which generates still more electricity to power pumps and to deliver heat.

The plant is a model of energy efficiency. It is also a model of energy diversity. It uses conventional fuels like oil and natural gas and coal, and renewable fuels like wood chips. And the plant is a model of affordability. While other energy prices rise, District Energy has not raised its heating and cooling rates in 4 years.

We're beginning to see the power of the future, not only in office buildings but also in our homes and our cars. This spring the Sustainable Buildings Industry Council showcased a solar-powered home so advanced that it actually produces more energy than it uses. And some Americans are already driving hybrid cars that can convert to battery power to reduce emissions and get up to 70 miles a gallon of gas. These are our early glimpses of a future in which Americans will meet our energy needs in ways that are efficient, clean, convenient, and affordable.

The future is achievable, if we make the right choices now. But if we fail to act,

this great country could face a darker future, a future that is, unfortunately, being previewed in rising prices at the gas pump and rolling blackouts in the great State of California.

These events are challenging what had become a fact of life in America, the routine, everyday expectation that when you flick on a light switch, the light will come on. Californians are learning, regrettably, that sometimes when you flick on the light switch, the light does not come on, at any price.

I'm deeply concerned about the impact of blackouts on the daily lives of the good people of the State of California. And my administration is committed to helping California. We're helping right now by expediting permits for new power production and by working as good partners to reduce our electricity at Federal facilities, especially during the peak periods this summer.

My administration has developed a sane national plan to help meet our energy needs this year and every year. If we fail to act on this plan, energy prices will continue to rise. For two decades, the share of the average family budget spent on energy steadily declined. But since 1998, it has skyrocketed by 25 percent. And that's a hardship for every American family.

If we fail to act, Americans will face more and more widespread blackouts. If we fail to act, our country will become more reliant on foreign crude oil, putting our national energy security into the hands of foreign nations, some of whom do not share our interests. And if we fail to act, our environment will suffer, as government officials struggle to prevent blackouts in the only way possible—by calling on more polluting emergency backup generators, and by running less efficient, old powerplants too long and too hard.

America cannot allow that to be our future, and we will not. To protect the environment, to meet our growing energy needs, to improve our quality of life, America needs an energy plan that faces up to our energy challenges and meets them.

Vice President Cheney and many members of my Cabinet spent months analyzing our problems and seeking solutions. The result is a comprehensive series of more than 100 recommendations that light the way to a brighter future through energy that is abundant and reliable, cleaner and more affordable.

The plan addresses all three key aspects of the energy equation: demand, supply, and the means to match them. First, it reduces demand by promoting innovation and technology to make us the world leader in efficiency and conservation. Second, it expands and diversifies America's supply of all sources of energy: oil and gas, clean coal, solar, wind, biomass, hydropower, and other renewables, as well as safe and clean nuclear power. Third, and finally, the report outlines the ways to bring producers and consumers together, by modernizing the networks of pipes and wires that link the powerplant to the outlet on the wall.

Our new energy plan begins with a 21st century focus on conservation. The American entrepreneurial system constantly invents ways to do more with less. We pack more and more computing power onto a chip. We carry more and more messages over a cable. And we squeeze more and more power out of a barrel of oil or a cubic foot of natural gas. A new refrigerator you buy today, for example, uses 65 percent less electricity than one that was made 30 years ago. Overall, we use 40 percent less energy to produce new goods and services than we did in 1973. But this steady improvement slowed in the 1990s.

Our energy plan will speed up progress on conservation where it has slowed and restart it where it has failed. It will underwrite research and development into energy-saving technology. It will require manufactures to build more energy-efficient appliances. We will review and remove the obstacles that prevent business from investing in energy-efficient technologies, like the

combined heat and power system I toured this morning. Conservation does not mean doing without. Thanks to new technology, it can mean doing better and smarter and cheaper.

Innovation helps us all make better choices. Smart electric meters can tell homeowners how they're using power and how they might reduce their monthly electric bill. Sensors can turn off lights when people leave a room. And innovation is bringing us transmission wires that waste less of the electricity they carry from plant to home or to office.

Conservation on a wide scale takes more than good ideas; it takes capital investment. Outdated buildings and factories have to be upgraded or replaced to consume less and pollute less. And here, some well-intentioned regulations have created a catch-22: Procedures intended to protect the environment have too often blocked environmental progress by discouraging companies from installing newer and cleaner equipment.

Wise regulation and American innovation will make this country the world's leader in energy efficiency and conservation in the 21st century. Our goal is to use less additional energy to fuel more economic growth. And I know we can do so. I also know that conservation is the result of millions of good choices made across our land on a daily basis.

Yet even as we grow more efficient, even as this Nation achieves the objectives in conservation, we will always require some additional energy to power our expanding economy. We learn that from the California experience. California has been an impressive conservation leader. It is the second most energy-efficient State in the Union. But California has not built a major new powerplant in a decade. And not even the most admirable conservation effort could keep up with the State's demand for electricity.

So the second part of our energy plan will be to expand and diversify our Nation's energy supplies. Diversity is important, not only for energy security but also for national security. Overdependence on any one source of energy, especially a foreign source, leaves us vulnerable to price shocks, supply interruptions, and in the worst case, blackmail. America today imports 52 percent of all our oil. If we don't take action, those imports will only grow. As long as cars and trucks run on gasoline, we will need oil, and we should produce more of it at home.

New technology makes drilling for oil far more productive, as well as environmentally friendly, than it was 30 or 40 years ago. Here is the result of one study, and I quote: "Improvements over the past 40 years have dramatically reduced industry's footprint on the fragile tundra, minimized waste produced, and protected the land for resident and migratory wildlife." Those aren't my words. Those are the words of the Department of Energy study conducted during my predecessor's administration. Advanced new technologies allows entrepreneurs and risk-takers to find oil and to extract it in ways that leave nature undisturbed.

Where oil is found underneath sensitive landscapes, rigs can stand miles away from the oil field and tap a reservoir at an angle. In Arctic sites like ANWR, we can build roads of ice that literally melt away when summer comes, and the drilling then stops to protect wildlife. ANWR can produce 600,000 barrels of oil a day for the next 40 years. What difference does 600,000 barrels a day make? Well, that happens to be exactly the amount we import from Saddam Hussein's Iraq.

We're not just short of oil; we're short of the refineries that turn oil into fuel. So while the rest of our economy is functioning at 82 percent of capacity, our refineries are gasping at 96 percent of capacity. A single accident, a single shutdown can send prices of gasoline and heating oil spiraling all over the country. The major reason for dramatic increase in gasoline prices today is the lack of refining capacity. And

my plan gives the needed flexibility and certainty so refiners will make the investments necessary to expand supply by increasing capacity.

And America needs to generate more electricity. The Department of Energy estimates that America will need between 1,300 and 1,900 new powerplants over the next two decades. A high-tech economy is a high-electricity consumption economy. Even the sleekest laptop needs to plug into an electrical outlet from time to time.

More than half of the electricity generated in America today comes from coal. If we were not blessed with this natural resource, we would face even greater shortages and higher prices today. Yet, coal presents an environmental challenge. So our plan funds research into new, clean coal technologies. It calls on Congress to enact strict new multipollutant legislation to reduce emissions from electric powerplants.

My administration's energy plan anticipates that most new electric plants will be fueled by the cleanest of all fossil fuels, natural gas. Our Nation and our hemisphere are rich in natural gas resources. But our ability to develop gas resources has been hampered by restrictions on natural gas exploration. Our ability to deliver gas to consumers has been hindered by opposition to construction of new pipelines that, today, are more safe and more efficient. I will call on Congress to pass legislation to bring more gas to market, while improving pipeline safety and safeguarding the environment.

America should also expand a clean and unlimited source of energy, nuclear power. Many Americans may not realize that nuclear power already provides one-fifth of this Nation's electricity, safely, and without air pollution. But the last American nuclear powerplant to enter operation was ordered in 1973. In contrast, France, our friend and ally, gets 80 percent of its electricity from nuclear power.

By renewing and expanding existing nuclear facilities, we can generate tens of thousands of megawatts of electricity at a reasonable cost, without pumping a gram of greenhouse gas into the atmosphere. New reactor designs are even safer and more economical than the reactors we possess today. And my energy plan directs the Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency to use the best science to move expeditiously to find a safe and permanent repository for nuclear waste.

Our energy plan also supports the development of new and renewable sources of energy. It recommends tax credits to homeowners who invest in solar homes, and to utilities that build wind turbines or harness biomass and other environmentally friendly forms of power. It removes impediments to the development of hydroelectricity. It proposes incentives to buy new cars that run on alternative fuels, like ethanol, that consume less oil and, therefore, pollute less. It supports research into fuel cells, a technology of tomorrow that can power a car with hydrogen, the most common element in the universe, and emit only steam as a waste product.

In all these ways, we will expand the diversity of our energy supply. But as with conservation, new energy supply alone is not the whole answer. There's a third element we must address: modernizing the network that delivers the supply to the point of demand.

In 1919 a young U.S. Army officer was ordered to lead a truck convoy westward across our country. He was astonished to discover that the journey took 62 days. His name was Dwight David Eisenhower. And the memory of this bumpy transcontinental ride led to the creation of a modern transportation system.

Today, our electrical system is almost as bumpy as our highways were 80 years ago. We have chopped our country into dozens of local electricity markets, which are haphazardly connected to one another. For example, a weak link in California's electrical grid makes it difficult to transfer power

from the southern part of the State to the north, where the blackouts have been worse. Highways connect Miami with Seattle; phone lines link Los Angeles and New York. It is time to match your interstate highway and phone systems with an interstate electrical grid.

And here, too, technology will make a big difference. Electricity markets used to be localized because wires could not carry electrical current over long distances. More and better wires can efficiently ship power across the country, reducing the threat of local blackouts or outages.

And it's just not our electricity delivery system that has fallen behind. The energy report projects that natural gas consumption will rise rapidly, as electric utilities make greater and greater use of this environmentally friendly fuel. We will need newer, cleaner, and safer pipes to move these larger quantities of natural gas—up to 38,000 new miles of pipe and 263,000 miles of distribution lines.

We'll also need to recognize the energy potential of our neighbors, Canada and Mexico, and make it easier for buyers and sellers of energy to do business across our national borders.

And finally, we must work to build a new harmony between our energy needs and our environmental concerns. Too often Americans are asked to take sides between energy production and environmental protection, as if people who revere the Alaska wilderness do not also care about America's energy future; as if the people who produce America's energy do not care about the planet their children will inherit. The truth is, energy production and environmental protection are not competing priorities. They are dual aspects of a single purpose: to live well and wisely upon the Earth.

Just as we need a new tone in Washington, we also need a new tone in discussing energy and the environment, one that is less suspicious, less punitive, less rancorous. We've yelled at each other enough. Now it's time to listen to each other and to act.

And it's time to act. The energy plan I lay out for the Nation harnesses the power of modern markets and the potential of new technology. It looks at today's energy problem and sees tomorrow's energy opportunity. It addresses today's energy shortages and shows the way to tomorrow's energy abundance.

I have great faith in our country's ability to solve the energy problem, and our energy plan shows the way. But most of all, I have great faith in the American people. Our land's ingenuity, our innovation, our entrepreneurial spirits is this country's greatest of all resources. And thank God, they are never in short supply.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:30 a.m. at the RiverCentre Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Norm Coleman of St. Paul; John Labosky, president, Capital City Partnership; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. The President also referred to ANWR, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The related Executive orders of May 18 are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the Iowa Energy Center in Nevada, Iowa
May 17, 2001

The President. Please be seated. Senator, thank you very much. It's great to see you again, and thank you so much for introducing me. It's nice to be here in Nevada. [*Laughter*] Mr. Mayor, I bet you were a little nervous about how I was going to

pronounce that, weren't you? [*Laughter*] But thank you so much, Andy, for being here. And I thank you for being here, as well, Ms. Murphy. It's an honor to see you.

I'm pleased to be here with the Governor. Mr. Governor, thank you for taking time. I am impressed that your State has got the imagination and the foresight to be on the cutting edge of research and development necessary to help our Nation become energy-independent.

I'm so honored the two fabulous State senators are here. How are you all doing? I hope you're behaving—[*laughter*]—better than you were the last time I saw you. [*Laughter*] Thanks for coming. And finally, Ganske, Congressman Ganske, thank you for being here, friend. It's good to see you.

I'm thrilled to be traveling today with two members of my Cabinet, who the Senator just introduced. I'm going to ask them to say a few remarks about our vision for America. I want to thank Floyd for his hospitality. I want to thank the president of Iowa State for being here. I told him I didn't appreciate how the Iowa State people treated those Texas basketball teams this year. [*Laughter*] He said he didn't really care what I thought about how—[*laughter*].

I'm really glad to be back in Iowa. This is not a time to talk politics, but I do want to tell the citizens of Iowa I appreciated so very much the hospitality of this great State. I told people that this is a unique State, because every time I came, people treated me with respect and were very kind. I think it may be one of the kindest States in the United States, which is a great tribute to the people of this State.

Frankly, we need a little more kindness in America, and we definitely need a new tone in Washington, DC. We need to be able to have a discussion of public policy that's important for the country without name-calling and finger-pointing, without the attitude of zero-sum politics. If the President proposed it, it's got to automatically be bad, because he said so. And if an opponent said it, it's automatically got to be bad, because he or she said it. That's not right for America. And it's particularly not right when it comes to addressing huge issues and important issues, like energy security and energy independence.

Today I had the honor of talking—laying out a comprehensive energy plan for the country. I had asked the Vice President and members of my Cabinet to take a look at the situation, analyze the problem, and to come up with solutions. And today I outlined over 100 solutions—proposals as a solution to the problems we face.

We face a shortage of energy. I was reading in the newspaper today where there is a shortage of energy in one of the major cities in Iowa. It is real. It is not an imagination of anybody in my administration. It's not out of our imagination. It's a real problem. And we believe that this administration was elected to address those problems—forget politics—to put policies out for the Nation to debate, and then to act on those policies.

So today I've laid out an initiative that said, first and foremost, we better be better conservationists in the country. We need to conserve. We need to be wise about how we use energy. We need to figure out how to drive new kinds of cars that don't overconsume hydrocarbons. We need to figure out how to have smart technologies in our homes. Citizens need to figure out how to be more conservation oriented. We need to be mindful of turning off lights. And we've got regulations that Christie Todd may talk about that talks about more fuel-efficient appliances. And we're making progress in America. We're better conservationists than we've been in the past, but there's still more work to do.

And secondly, no matter how well we conserve, we're still going to need more energy. As I noted today, the State of California is the second best State in the Union for conservation measures, and yet they've got a problem. They have run out of energy at times. That's called rolling blackouts. It

just goes to show that we can conserve, but we also need to come up with additional supplies.

And I talked about those supplies. And one of the keys to energy security in America, and national security, is to have a diversified energy base. That means oil; that means gas; that means safe nuclear energy; that means clean coal technologies to make sure the abundance of coal that we use is done in a friendly—environmentally friendly way.

But it also means interesting new opportunities such as biomass, and that's why we've come here. I can't think of anything better for national security than to replace barrels of oil that come into the country from nations that can't stand America—some of them don't—with products that we grow here in America. I can't think of—I would much rather replace oil from Iraq with corn products from Iowa, and it's getting within our reach.

I was talking to Floyd about how real are the products that are being looked at here; how close are we to reality. And he said, "Pretty darn close." Biodiesel is what he talked about. We're pretty darn close, and we're more than close when it comes to ethanol. It's real. And I said during the campaign here that I support ethanol. You've just got to know, I supported it not only as a candidate, but I support it as the President. It makes sense for America.

You know, much of the debate on energy seems to polarize the country. It doesn't have to be that way: You're either for exploration and therefore against the environment, or for the environment and therefore against exploration. And that's not the way the discourse ought to go.

The discourse ought to go: How can we explore without hurting the environment? And I strongly believe, and I know that technologies have developed over the last 30 years, so that I can say with certainty to the American people, we can explore for precious fuels like natural gas in a way that does not harm our environment. It doesn't harm our—we can go to the Arctic, for example, and build ice roads and bring the equipment on an ice road and build a pad made out of ice and then for those few periods of time when the ice melts, withdraw the equipment. And then when the ice comes back, come back, so we don't damage the tundra. We can drill from one location to a reservoir miles away. The technology has changed.

So instead of having a debate that says, well, we can't drill because of the environment, or we can't—and we're not for energy independence if you're for the environment, we need to have a discourse that says, let's work together in America. Let's make sure we can have both. Otherwise, our folks are going to hurt.

We don't want the blackouts of California, which affects a lot of hard-working people's lives in a negative way, to extend its reach across the country. We don't want that to happen. Nobody likes it when gas prices are high. I know there are farmers out there working to make a living on a thin margin, and when the price of refined product goes up, it affects the livelihood of hard-working people in Iowa. Nobody likes that.

So instead of polarizing, we need to come together with solutions. We need more refining capacity in America, folks. We need to make sure we protect the environment, but have incentives and regulations that encourage the development of additional supply.

And finally, in my speech today, I'm going—I talked about conservation, and I talked about additional supplies in a diversified supply base. I also talked about making sure that we get the product from point A to the consumers. And our infrastructure is aging. It's old. Our electricity grid needs to be modernized, so we can move product from point A to point B. There are places in southern California where there's ample energy, but they can't get it to northern California, where there's been blackouts,

because the transmission system is not modern.

Natural gas is clean. It burns clean. It's—a lot of plants now that are coming on line to meet the electricity needs of America are going to be fueled by natural gas. And that's good news. But we need pipelines to get the gas from reservoir to user. And we need to understand that. We need to understand we need to move more product expeditiously around America.

So this is an energy plan that says to America, let's work together to get after this problem. Let's work together to bring commonsense solutions. And let's think about how best to deploy and employ our resources here in America, starting with what's happening here. We're really—I am very excited about what I heard. It's such a vast potential, and it's a great opportunity. And that's why we support research and development of such activities that take place here.

You know, I've got such great faith in America. I do, because one thing we're not in short supply of is an entrepreneurial spirit and brains and problem-solvers. That's really the greatness of America. And it's such an honor to be the President of such a great land.

And it is also my honor—and it's my honor to welcome to the podium the Secretary of Energy, former United States Senator Spencer Abraham.

[*At this point, Energy Secretary Abraham made brief remarks.*]

The President. Again, Governor, thank you very much for taking time—and Mr. Mayor.

Ganske, are you on the airplane with me? Oh, you're not on the airplane with me. Well, great to see you. [*Laughter*]

I must say something about your—about Senator Grassley. First of all, I got a kick out of campaigning with him throughout Iowa. He's got a remarkable sense of humor and a great love for Iowa. But he is making a good deal of progress on getting a tax relief package out of the United States Congress. Iowans need to be proud of his leadership.

I saw a lot of folks during the campaign here, and they talked a lot about me getting rid of the death tax, and we're making good progress. And Senator Grassley is really one of the leaders. He has assumed an incredibly important position in the Senate, and he is bringing a lot of honor to your State.

He's heard the call, and that is this: We need to get tax relief done as quickly as possible. I need to be signing a bill before Memorial Day so we can get money. We need to start getting some of that surplus in the hands of the hard-working American people, to help provide a second wind to our economy, and to help with some of the high energy bills that people are now facing.

And you need to be proud of your Senator. He's working hard, and I'm sure proud to call him friend. And I want to thank you all for coming and giving us a chance to talk—to close an important day in my administration here in a State that has got an incredible potential and can play a major role in value-added processing that will help this great Nation of ours realize its vast potential as we head into the 21st century.

Thanks for coming, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:55 p.m. at the Biomass Energy Conversion Facility. In his remarks, he referred to Senator Charles E. Grassley, who introduced the President; Mayor Andrew Murphy of Nevada and his wife, Shelly; Gov. Thomas J. Vilsack of Iowa; Floyd Barwig, director, Iowa Energy Center; Richard Seagrave, interim president, Iowa State University; and Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Christine Todd Whitman. The related Executive orders of May 18 are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks Greeting Crewmembers of the United States Navy Surveillance Aircraft Downed in China and an Exchange With Reporters
May 18, 2001

The President. Welcome to the Oval Office. The Vice President and I are thrilled to be able to look you in the eye and say thanks for your service to the country. I remember in my phone call saying, "Gosh, I hope I can welcome you to the Oval Office," and here you are.

You handled yourselves with such class and dignity, it was important for our Nation to realize the fine caliber of people that serve our country. And we're really proud of you. We appreciate your mission, but most of all, we appreciate your character. And so it's my honor to welcome you here. I look forward to giving you a tour around this majestic office, a shrine to the greatness of America.

Situation in the Middle East

I want to say one other thing before we visit informally. Today the violence in the Middle East took on a new level of intensity. Our country is deeply concerned, first and foremost, for those who lost their life and for the families affected. It is essential that the leaders in the Middle East speak out clearly against violence.

We must break the cycle of violence in order to begin meaningful discussions about any kind of political settlement. My administration will continue to work with the parties involved, reminding folks that violence will not lead to peace, obviously. Violence will make it so difficult for there to be any political settlement.

I'm concerned any time anybody loses life. I'm especially concerned about suicide bombers that have disregard for themselves and, obviously, for innocent folks. We will continue to work hard to bring peace to that important part of the region.

Thank you all for coming.

EP–3 Surveillance Aircraft in China

Q. What is the latest on the spy plane?

The President. We're working to get the plane home. We're making progress about getting the plane home. But today we get to celebrate the fact that the crew is home. And that's the most important thing.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:40 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at the Safe Harbor Water Power Corporation in Conestoga, Pennsylvania
May 18, 2001

Thank you very much. Please be seated. Well, Governor, thank you very much. It's an honor to be back in your beautiful State. I'm glad you told me you were overseas recently; I thought you might have been boycotting my last visit to your State—[*laughter*]—which was Monday. [*Laughter*]

Laura and I consider Tom and Michele close personal friends, as well as political allies. And I know the people of Pennsylvania consider him to be an excellent Governor, because he is one.

I want to thank you all for coming. And I also want to thank the hundreds of citizens that lined the road as we came in,

to wave. It makes a fellow feel pretty good to see all the flags and the salutes. This is a wonderful place to come, not only because it speaks volumes about the policy that I'm going to address today, but it also reminds me of how wonderful our country is, how good and solid the people are that inhabit the great land called America. So if you see any of them that were on the road coming in, tell them the President says, thanks a lot for the hospitality.

I'm also honored to be traveling today with Members of the United States Congress. The United States Senator—I was going to say, the senior Senator, but I'm looking for some votes from him—[*laughter*]—but that's Arlen Specter, who is doing a great job for the people of Pennsylvania; and the younger Senator, Senator Rick Santorum, as well. As well, a friend of mine from the great State of Alaska is with us, chairman of the Energy Committee, Frank Murkowski. I think old Frank must be looking for a cup of coffee somewhere. [*Laughter*]

We also have the Congressman from this area, Congressman Todd Platts—where are you, Todd? There you go. Thank you, buddy—and Congressman Joe Pitts and Congressman George Gekas as well, from the State of Pennsylvania. And we're pleased, as well, to have a Member of the United States Congress from the West who, like Murkowski, takes great interest in energy policy, and that's Congressman Jim Hansen from the State of Utah. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank Marshall Kaiser and the hard-working employees of Safe Harbor who made our visit so special. Thank you for making all the arrangements, and thanks for setting up this spectacular place to deliver a few remarks and to sign some important documents.

You know, when I ran for office, I told the people of our country that I would put together a Cabinet of some of the finest Americans that would be—who would be willing to serve. And I did so. I'm blessed with a great Cabinet, and two of the fine Cabinet members are here with us: Spence Abraham and Christie Todd Whitman. And I thank them so much for their leadership.

I was pretty plainspoken about what I intended to do, should I be fortunate enough to become the President. And when I put my hand on the Bible that day, right afterwards, I intended to get to work. I said, "It's time to get after it, time to do in office what I said I would do." And that's what's taken place in Washington.

First, I said, if I happened to be the President, I was going to fight for meaningful, real tax relief to make sure the working people got to put some of that surplus in their pockets. And we're about to have tax cuts for the American people. And my call to Congress is to get it done before Memorial Day, to get the money to the people before the great Memorial Day holiday, so people have got more money to spend and save and more money in their pockets to take care of some of these energy prices that exist as a result of the failure to have an energy plan for America.

Secondly, I said, give us a chance—and we had put together a group of Congressmen and Senators to pass meaningful, real reform of our education system, one that would empower local folks, to give more power at the local level because we recognize one size does not fit all when it comes to the education of the children, but also one that says, if you receive Federal money, show us whether or not children are learning to read and write and add and subtract, because we want to know. We want to know whether or not the very faces of our future are learning, and if they're not—if they're not, we won't sit idly by in America. When we find youngsters who can't read, we'll correct the problems early, before it's too late, because our motto is, "Not one single child will be left behind in America."

I told the people of our country we would boost the morale of the military by having a clear mission and also making sure our troops were better paid and better housed. And my budget reflects that commitment to the military.

And I told the people during the campaign that we've got a problem with energy in America. Our demand is going up, and the supplies aren't going up with demand, and therefore, there is pressure on price. I said it in the campaign, and I'm saying it to you now: This Nation must adopt a national energy plan to make sure our consumers and workers and entrepreneurs have the capacity to realize the visions of a better life that we all have for America.

And so, yesterday I gave a speech that did just that, a speech that recognizes we have a problem. I figured I was elected to solve problems, if there are problems—not just to hold the office but to solve problems. And so we laid out a plan that has 100 different proposals—more than 100 proposals as to how to get after this energy problem we face and what to do about it. And it starts with encouraging and enhancing conservation efforts all around America. We can do a better job of conserving in this country. We can have policies that encourage conservation. We can have research that yields to better methodology for conservation.

But all of us must do a better job of conserving, as well. Each of us must be mindful of being conscious about wasting electricity. We're going to have better cars, I'm convinced of it, that have better mileage, rely less upon hydrocarbons. We'll have better homes, many of which will be powered by solar energy. This future is fantastic for the country. And a lot of it is based upon good, sound conservation measures.

But as I reminded the people yesterday, a State that has done a fantastic job in conservation has been the State of California. They're the second best at conservation measures. And yet, they're lacking energy; they're having blackouts. And we all must be deeply concerned about our fellow citizens in the great State of California. But the problems in California shows that you cannot conserve your way to energy independence, that not only do we need to have good conservation, but we must have a diversified base of supply, including hydroelectric supply.

And I also talked about the need to make sure that we had a modern infrastructure to be able to get energy from the powerplant to the light switch, that we've got to do a better job of modernizing the capacity to move not only electricity but products like natural gas from point A to point B, in order to have an energy—to have a country where we have abundant and cheaper and safer and cleaner energy sources.

So this is a vision that recognizes, one, we have a problem, and the willingness to confront it; but two, a vision that relies upon common sense, and it relies upon ingenuity of the American people and the entrepreneurial instincts of our country.

And it's great to be here in Pennsylvania, because Pennsylvania is a State that's on the forefront of diversification and conservation. And it's an appropriate place to be, because this dam is a symbol of the new age of environmental possibilities. It's powering Pennsylvania's economy, while at the same time restoring Pennsylvania wildlife. It goes to show that economic growth and a good environmental policy do not have to be zero-sum. It doesn't have to be either/or.

And one of the most important things we've got to do in this country is change the tone about the debate about economic growth and the environment. You know, it seems like recently, those of us who used to not be in Washington, we'd be looking up there and seeing that people would rather argue than discuss. They'd rather call names, rather than come up with solutions.

They'd rather point fingers at people, rather than holding out the hand of constructive dialog. And it's got to change.

And this is an administration that's committed—committed—to putting the people ahead of politics and talking about dialog and discussing important issues in a way that will bring honor to the process, so that when youngsters look up at our Nation's Capitol, they're proud of what they see.

And we laid out a plan, and I hope there's good, honorable debate about the plan, because it's based upon common sense and it's based upon hope and it's based upon new technologies.

I think it's very important for our country to realize what Spence talked about, and that is the need to make sure we diversify our energy supplies. It's important to do so for national security reasons, for starters. As I mentioned yesterday in Iowa—we went to a place that was doing research on biomass and value-added processing, and I said to the folks there, I said, "I would much rather have our economy powered by crops grown in Iowa than barrels of oil coming out of Iraq." It's in our Nation's interest that we diversify. It's in our Nation's interest that we become less dependent upon nations, some of which really don't care for what we believe in. And I believe we can do so.

Now, that's going to mean we've got to understand the power and promise of nuclear energy, that we've got to be willing to discuss nuclear energy and recognize that nuclear power is much safer than it's ever been and, at the same time, use sound science to help us find the right place to store the product of nuclear power.

It means we've got to understand the hope and promise of natural gas and be willing to explore for natural gas in places that heretofore have been off limits, such as remote areas of Alaska.

I want you all to understand that the debate about ANWR is one that is not based—as far as I'm concerned—based upon sound fact. You see, first of all, ANWR—what we're talking about is 2,000 acres amongst, I believe it's 19 million acres; secondly, the technology has changed so that one is able to have a single drill site and explore for reservoir miles away from the drill site; thirdly, the explorationists are willing to only move equipment during the winter, which means they'll be on ice roads, and remove the equipment as the ice begins to melt, so that the fragile tundra is protected.

People have got to understand that it's possible that we could find, and likely find, 600,000 barrels of oil a day out of ANWR. That's what we import from Saudi—I mean, from Iraq. It makes sense, folks, for us to have an environmentally sensitive exploration plan in America in order to diversify supply, not only for national security reasons but for international reasons, as well.

We need more natural gas in America. Natural gas is a clean burning fuel. There's a lot of it. But in order to find it, we're going to have to move it by pipeline. And we need more pipeline, and we need safer pipelines, and technology allows us to do so.

There's a lot of discussion about alternative sources of energy. Hydroelectric power is one, and our Nation must welcome hydroelectric power as a renewable resource. They talk about solar energy. We're very much in support of the alternative forms of energy. I hope some day that these renewables will be the dominant source of energy in America. I'm not so sure how realistic that is, but nevertheless, they'll play an integral part of the energy mix in America. And my administration, through incentives and research, will encourage them to be.

I firmly believe we can solve this problem. I know we can't solve it without a plan, and that's why I've laid one out. I know we can't solve it without an administration being willing to say, "This is a tough issue, but we want to tackle it. We want

to take it on. We want to lead the people." And so we're willing to do that. It's right for America that we do so. It's the right thing for this country. It's the right thing for people who are coming up in a land that want to realize their dreams.

And it's right to change the tone in Washington, DC, as well. And we need your help to do so. When you hear these folks—it doesn't matter what side of the debate they're on—who are willing to kind of castigate somebody who may have a good idea, stand up and let them have it. [*Laughter*] This is too important an issue. It's too important an issue to allow the rhetoric to deteriorate.

And so what I'm here to tell you is, is that you've got an administration that's willing to take the lead on a tough issue; an administration that's going to bring some commonsense practice to energy policy; and an administration that is willing to talk not only about conservation but enhancing supply and the means to get supply to those who use it; an administration who understands the responsibility of the high offices that we hold; an administration that looks forward to working with my fellow Americans to get it done.

I said yesterday, and I know it's true, that we're going to lead the world when it comes to energy and how to do it and how to balance our needs and still have economic growth and how to have good environmental policy with economic growth. Because one thing we're not short of—we may be short of certain forms of energy, but we're not short of the American spirit. We're not short of innovative people. We're not short of hard-working Americans. We're not short of the entrepreneurial spirit. As a matter of fact, we've got a plentiful supply of all those. And as a result, this great Nation is going to be a leader, not a follower, when it comes to energy policy.

Yesterday I talked about the need for us to act. And today I have the honor of acting. I'm going to sign two Executive orders to promote energy security, and I'm honored to do so right here in the great State of Pennsylvania. I'm sure there were some folks that were watching the speech or heard about the speech, probably saying, "Yes, all we've got now is another report that's going to sit on a shelf in Washington, just to gather a little dust." I can assure the American people that mine is an administration that's not interested in gathering dust. We're interested in acting.

And so today—one of the Executive orders will bring new energy projects online faster, and that's especially important this year, as we end—as we work together to end the blackouts in California. And the other will ensure that the Federal Government pays due attention to energy when it makes decisions, because the fuel that powers our economy should never be a second thought.

To bring projects faster online, I'm ordering all Federal agencies to expedite their review of energy-related permits while maintaining safety, public health, and environmental protections. These protections are vital, and so is energy. And we don't want to either—we don't want either of them snarled in bureaucratic tangles, as local governments or entrepreneurs seek permit after permit from agency after agency. This Executive order creates an interagency task force to examine how to move good projects through the Federal bureaucracy as quickly as possible. And to underscore my administration's commitment to reconciling energy production and environmental protection, the task force will be chaired by the Chairman of the Council of Environmental Quality.

The next Executive order prods the Federal Government to take America's energy supplies very seriously. Any Federal agency that proposes a major regulatory action that significantly affects energy must, from now on, file a statement of energy impact if the decision will have an adverse affect on energy supply, distribution, or use. And the

agency must describe what reasonable alternatives to its decision may exist. The statement of energy impact is not a red light preventing any agency from taking any action. It is a yellow light that says, pause and think before you make decisions that squeeze consumer's pocketbooks, that may cause energy shortages or that may make us more dependent on foreign energy.

These two orders are the next steps toward a brighter energy future. Thank you for joining me as I sign them.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:25 a.m. on the intake deck. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Tom Ridge of Pennsylvania and his wife, Michele; and Marshall J. Kaiser, president and chief executive officer, Safe Harbor Water Power Corporation. The President also referred to ANWR, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The Executive orders of May 18 are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks on the Observance of Cuban Independence Day
May 18, 2001

Sientese. [*Laughter*] *Bienvenidos a la casa de todos que—quien viven en este grande pais.* Welcome to the White House.

Mr. Secretary, you were an easy pick. [*Laughter*] There's no question you do a fabulous job on behalf of America. Thank you for taking the assignment.

Another member of my team who is here who helps us have a strong and certain foreign policy is *Senorita* Condoleezza *Arroz.* [*Laughter*] That means "Rice." [*Laughter*]

Senator Graham, thank you for being here. We're honored by your presence. I know you're a strong friend of Cuba's. And of course, to—and it's great that Ileana and Lincoln are with us, as well. Thank you.

I noticed when Gloria sang the Cuban anthem, that the first two people on their feet were the two Congresspeople from south Florida. And Lincoln, I did notice that you were braced at attention, too, I might add—proud. So it's great to have you all here.

Gloria, thank you very much. Sorry you brought your husband—but no. [*Laughter*] We love Emilio. He's a good man. And Gloria, thank you for coming and bringing *tu ninita.* Thank you all for being here. We love your music. Your husband has been such a good friend of me and my family's, and so have you.

The great poet—man, you must be a strong person with a beautiful heart and a wonderful artistic touch. Angel, welcome to the White House. And Lizebet, thank you for coming. I don't think many in America know your story, that you were picked up on a raft, and that you played the national anthem on your violin when you were picked up. That's beautiful.

And finally—*por fin, por fin, "la Voz"*—[*laughter*]—Jon Secada. Thank you, Jon, for being here. I appreciate you very much. Glad you're here.

It's a great honor for me to welcome you all to the White House to celebrate May 20th, Cuban Independence Day. It's a day when we honor the warm family ties, the faith, the history, and heritage that unite our two peoples.

As Angel and Lizebet and so many others remind us, it is a day when we pay thanks to the magnificent contributions of Cubans to our national life. They enrich every field, from science to industry to the arts, including my favorite performing art, baseball. [*Laughter*] But mostly, today is a day when we reflect on the greatnesses of Cuba's far-too-distant past and the brightness of its

future, of how together we can hasten that future's arrival.

Just last month I returned from the Summit of the Americas in Quebec City. Thirty-four democratic nations committed ourselves to building a hemisphere of freedom. But one nation was not there, because that nation has a leader who has no place at the democratic table. Indeed, his nation is not free but enslaved. He is the last holdout of the hemisphere, and time is not on his side.

The Cuban independence we celebrate today was the product of the enormous courage of the Cuban people and the statesmanship of leaders such as Jose Marti. The tyranny that rules Cuba today stands as an insult to their sacrifices. But we're confident in one fact: Cuban courage is more powerful and enduring than Castro's legacy and tyranny.

Our Nation has an economic embargo against Castro's regime. But today, of all days, it is important for us to remember that our goal is not to have an embargo against Cuba; it is freedom in Cuba.

The United States welcomes the opportunity to trade with Cuba when there are entrepreneurs who are free to trade with us. We welcome the opportunity to build diplomatic relations with Cuba when the Cuban Government is a democracy, when the Cuban people can be free from fear to say what they think and choose who shall govern them.

The sanctions our Government enforces against the Castro regime are not just a policy tool; they're a moral statement. My administration will oppose any attempt to weaken sanctions against Cuba's Government until the regime—and I will fight such attempts until this regime frees its political prisoners, holds democratic, free elections, and allows for free speech.

The policy of our Government is not merely to isolate Castro but to actively support those working to bring about democratic change in Cuba. And that is why we will support legislation like the "Cuban Solidarity Act" and the "Cuban Internal Opposition Assistance Act." History tells us that forcing change upon repressive regimes requires patience. But history also proves, from Poland to South Africa, that patience and courage and resolve can eventually cause oppressive governments to fear and then to fall.

One of the surest ways to foster freedom is to give people unlimited access to unbiased information. The strongest walls of oppression can't stand when the floodgates of modern telecommunications are opened. We must explore ways to expand access to the Internet for the average Cuban citizen. And we must strengthen the voices of Radio and TV Marti with strong leadership. And we will strengthen those voices with strong leadership and new direction.

Today—today I say this to Mr. Castro: If you are confident your ideas are right, then stop jamming the broadcasts of those whose ideas are different. And until you do, we will look for ways to use new technology from new locations to counter your silencing of the voices of liberty.

Last month the U.N. Human Rights Commission called on Castro's regime to respect the basic human rights of all its people. The United States leadership was responsible for passage of that resolution. Some say we paid a heavy price for it. But let me be clear: I'm very proud of what we did. And repressed people around the world must know this about the United States: We might not sit on some Commission, but we will always be the world's leader in support of human rights.

Today, all our citizens are proud to stand with all Cubans and all Cuban Americans who love freedom. We will continue to stand with you until that day, hopefully not in the too distant future, when all Cubans breathe the heady air of liberty.

We are proud to stand with those Cubans who, today, enrich our Nation with their energies and industry. We're proud to stand with the farmers and workers of Cuba who dream of liberty's blessings. We

are proud to stand, too, with those who are suffering and dying in jails because they had the courage to speak the truth.

Y aqui en este Casa Blanca, estamos felices de cultivar "una rosa blanca en Julio como en Enero." Y por fin, viva Cuba libre.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:30 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Mel R. Martinez; Representatives Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and Lincoln Diaz-Balart; entertainers Gloria and Emilio Estefan and their daughter, Emily Marie; poet Angel Cuadra; musician Lizebet Martinez; singer Jon Secada; and President Fidel Castro of Cuba.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Deployment of United States Military Personnel as Part of the Kosovo International Security Force

May 18, 2001

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

On December 18, 2000, then-President Clinton provided a report to the Congress regarding the continued deployment of combat-equipped U.S. military personnel as the U.S. contribution to the NATO-led international security force in Kosovo (KFOR) and to other countries in the region in support of that force. I am providing this supplemental report, consistent with the War Powers Resolution, to help ensure that the Congress is kept fully informed on continued U.S. contributions in support of peacekeeping efforts in Kosovo.

As noted in previous reports, the U.N. Security Council authorized member states to establish KFOR in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1244 of June 10, 1999. The mission of KFOR is to provide a military presence in order to deter renewed hostilities; verify and, if necessary, enforce the Terms of the Military Technical Agreement (MTA) between NATO and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY); enforce the terms of the Undertaking on Demilitarization and Transformation of the former Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA); provide day-to-day operational direction to the Kosovo Protection Corps; and maintain a safe and secure environment to facilitate the work of the U.N. Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

Currently, the U.S. contribution to KFOR in Kosovo is approximately 6,000 U.S. military personnel. An additional 500 U.S. military personnel are deployed as the National Support Element in Macedonia, with an occasional presence in Albania and Greece. In the last 6 months, all 19 NATO nations and 21 others, including Russia, have provided military personnel and other support personnel to KFOR in Kosovo and other countries in the region.

In Kosovo, the U.S. forces are assigned to a sector principally centered upon Gnjilane in the eastern portion of Kosovo. For U.S. KFOR forces, as for KFOR generally, maintaining a safe and secure environment remains the primary military task. United States forces conduct security patrols in urban areas and in the countryside throughout their sector. Approximately 79 percent of KFOR soldiers are dedicated to patrolling, manning checkpoints, and mounting border and boundary patrols. The KFOR forces operate under NATO command and control and rules of engagement.

The UNMIK continues to make progress in establishing the necessary structures for provisional democratic self-government in

Kosovo, including through the recent promulgation of the Constitutional Framework for Provisional Self Government and preparations for Kosovo-wide elections. The KFOR coordinates with and supports UNMIK at most levels, and is represented at the Kosovo Transitional Council and the Joint Civil Commissions. Also, KFOR support includes providing a security presence in towns, villages, and the countryside, and organizing checkpoints and patrols in key areas of Kosovo to provide security, protect minorities, resolve disputes, and help instill in the community a feeling of confidence. Finally, KFOR is supporting, within its means and capabilities, the provision of humanitarian relief, public safety and order, and the maintenance of essential civic works resources.

NATO continues formally to review KFOR's mission at 6-month intervals. The conclusions reached as a result of the ongoing 6-month review, which is scheduled to be completed by late May, will be presented to the NATO foreign and defense ministers' meeting, which will be held in late May and early June. These reviews provide a basis for assessing current force levels, future requirements, force structure, force reductions, and the eventual withdrawal of KFOR. The KFOR has transferred responsibility for its public safety and policing responsibilities to the UNMIK international and local police forces in every area except Kosovska Mitrovica and Pec.

The continued deployment of U.S. forces has been undertaken pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. I appreciate the continued support of the Congress in these actions.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate.

The President's Radio Address
May 19, 2001

Good morning. This week I outlined a new energy strategy for our Nation—more than 100 specific recommendations to promote energy conservation, enlarge and diversify our energy supply, and modernize the networks that link energy producers to energy consumers.

We need to act to protect family budgets. Since 1998, the energy bill of the average family has skyrocketed by 25 percent. That's a hardship for every family. We need to act to prevent more and more widespread blackouts. Blackouts disrupt businesses and put public health and safety at risk. We need to act to reduce our reliance on foreign crude oil. And if we fail to act, our environment will suffer as Government officials struggle to prevent blackouts in the only way possible, by calling on more polluting emergency backup generators and by running less efficient old powerplants too long and too hard. So we will act to protect our economy and to safeguard our environment.

Too often Americans are asked to take sides between energy production and environmental protection. The truth is, energy production and environmental protection are not competing priorities. Both can be achieved with new technology and a new vision.

Most of the new electric powerplants we build over the next 20 years will be fueled by clean and safe natural gas. Many of the

others will be powered by wind, solar, hydropower, nuclear, and other energy sources that emit no pollution at all. New cars emit 95 percent less pollution than cars built 30 years ago. And my energy plan fosters the development of a new generation of cars that is even cleaner still.

Wise regulation and American innovation will make this country the world's leader in energy efficiency and conservation in the 21st century. We will use less and less additional energy to fuel more and more economic growth. Yet, even as we grow more efficient, we will always require some additional energy to power our expanding economy.

Advanced new technologies allow entrepreneurs to find oil and to extract it in ways that leave nature undisturbed. Where oil is found underneath sensitive landscapes, rigs can now stand miles away from the oilfield and tap the reservoir at an angle. In Arctic sites, like ANWR, we can build roads on ice that literally melt away when summer comes and the drilling stops to protect wildlife.

I was just in Pennsylvania and paid a visit to the Susquehanna River. After years of being endangered, American shad have been restored to this great waterway, and the fish are thriving alongside the dam that is generating emission-free hydroelectric power to meet the needs of Pennsylvania's people.

It's time to leave behind rancorous old arguments and build a positive new consensus. With new technology, sound regulation, and plain good sense, we can expand our energy production while protecting the environment. And that is exactly what my energy approach is designed to do.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:20 p.m. on May 18 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 19. In his address, the President referred to ANWR, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 18 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of the address.

Commencement Address at the University of Notre Dame in Notre Dame, Indiana

May 20, 2001

Thank you, Father Malloy. Thank you all for that warm welcome. Chairman McCartan, Father Scully, Dr. Hatch, Notre Dame trustees, members of the class of 2001. It is a high privilege to receive this degree. I'm particularly pleased that it bears the great name of Notre Dame. My brother Jeb may be the Catholic in the family—[*laughter*]—but between us, I'm the only Domer. [*Laughter*]

I have spoken on this campus before. It was in 1980, the year my dad ran for Vice President with Ronald Reagan. I think I really won over the crowd that day. [*Laughter*] In fact, I'm sure of it, because all six of them walked me to my car. [*Laughter*]

That was back when Father Hesburgh was the president of this university, during a tenure that in many ways defined the reputation and values of Notre Dame. It's a real honor to be with Father Hesburgh and with Father Joyce. Between them, these two good priests have given nearly a century of service to Notre Dame. I'm told that Father Hesburgh now holds 146

honorary degrees. That's pretty darn impressive, Father, but I'm gaining on you. [*Laughter*] As of today, I'm only 140 behind. [*Laughter*]

Let me congratulate all the members of the class of 2001. You made it, and we're all proud of you on this big day. I also congratulate the parents, who, after these years, are happy, proud, and broke. [*Laughter*]

I commend this fine faculty for the years of work and instruction that produced this outstanding class.

And I'm pleased to join my fellow honorees, as well. I'm in incredibly distinguished company with authors, executives, educators, church officials, and eminent scientists. We're sharing a memorable day and a great honor, and I congratulate you all.

Notre Dame, as a Catholic university, carries forward a great tradition of social teaching. It calls on all of us, Catholic and non-Catholic, to honor family, to protect life in all its stages, to serve and uplift the poor. This university is more than a community of scholars; it is a community of conscience and an ideal place to report on our Nation's commitment to the poor and how we're keeping it.

In 1964, the year I started college, another President from Texas delivered a commencement address talking about this national commitment. In that speech, President Lyndon Johnson issued a challenge. He said, "This is the time for decision. You are the generation which must decide. Will you decide to leave the future a society where a man is condemned to hopelessness because he was born poor, or will you join to wipe out poverty in this land?"

In that speech, Lyndon Johnson advocated a War on Poverty which had noble intentions and some enduring successes. Poor families got basic health care; disadvantaged children were given a head start in life. Yet, there were also some consequences that no one wanted or intended. The welfare entitlement became an enemy of personal effort and responsibility, turning many recipients into dependents. The War on Poverty also turned too many citizens into bystanders, convinced that compassion had become the work of Government alone.

In 1996, welfare reform confronted the first of these problems with a 5-year time limit on benefits and a work requirement to receive them. Instead of a way of life, welfare became an offer of temporary help—not an entitlement but a transition. Thanks in large part to this change, welfare rolls have been cut in half; work and self-respect have been returned to many lives. This is a tribute to the Republicans and Democrats who agreed on reform, and to the President who signed it, President Bill Clinton.

Our Nation has confronted welfare dependency. But our work is only half done. Now we must confront the second problem, to revive the spirit of citizenship, to marshal the compassion of our people to meet the continuing needs of our Nation. This is a challenge to my administration and to each one of you. We must meet that challenge because it is right and because it is urgent.

Welfare as we knew it has ended, but poverty has not. When over 12 million children live below the poverty line, we are not a post-poverty America. Most States are seeing the first wave of welfare recipients who have reached the law's 5-year time limit. The easy cases have already left the welfare rolls. The hardest problems remain, people with far fewer skills and greater barriers to work, people with complex human problems like illiteracy and addiction, abuse and mental illness. We do not yet know what will happen to these men and women or to their children, but we cannot sit and watch, leaving them to their own struggles and their own fate.

This is a great deal at stake. In our attitudes and actions, we are determining the character of our country. When poverty is considered hopeless, America is condemned to permanent social division, becoming a

nation of caste and class, divided by fences and gates and guards.

Our task is clear, and it's difficult: We must build our country's unity by extending our country's blessings.

We make that commitment because we are Americans. Aspiration is the essence of our country. We believe in social mobility, not social Darwinism. We are the country of the second chance, where failure is never final. And that dream has sometimes been deferred; it must never be abandoned.

We are committed to compassion for practical reasons. When men and women are lost to themselves, they are also lost to our Nation. When millions are hopeless, all of us are diminished by the loss of their gifts.

And we're committed to compassion for moral reasons. Jewish prophets and Catholic teaching both speak of God's special concern for the poor. This is perhaps the most radical teaching of faith, that the value of life is not contingent on wealth or strength or skill, that value is a reflection of God's image.

Much of today's poverty has more to do with troubled lives than a troubled economy. And often when a life is broken, it can only be restored by another caring, concerned human being. The answer for an abandoned child is not a job requirement; it is the loving presence of a mentor. The answer to addiction is not a demand for self-sufficiency; it is a personal support on the hard road to recovery.

The hope we seek is found in safe havens for battered women and children, in homeless shelters, in crisis pregnancy centers, in programs that tutor and conduct job training and help young people who may happen to be on parole. All these efforts provide not just a benefit but attention and kindness, a touch of courtesy, a dose of grace.

Mother Teresa said that what the poor often need, even more than shelter and food—though these are desperately needed, as well—is to be wanted. And that sense of belonging is within the power of each of us to provide. Many in this community have shown what compassion can accomplish.

Notre Dame's own Lou Nanni is the former director of South Bend's Center for the Homeless, an institution founded by two Notre Dame professors. It provides guests with everything from drug treatment to mental health service to classes in the Great Books to preschool for young children. Discipline is tough. Faith is encouraged, not required. Student volunteers are committed and consistent and central to its mission. Lou Nanni describes this mission as repairing the fabric of society by letting people see the inherent worth and dignity and God-given potential of every human being.

Compassion often works best on a small and human scale. It is generally better when a call for help is local, not long distance. Here at this university, you've heard that call and responded. It is part of what makes Notre Dame a great university.

This is my message today: There is no great society which is not a caring society. And any effective war on poverty must deploy what Dorothy Day called "the weapons of spirit."

There is only one problem with groups like South Bend's Center for the Homeless: There are not enough of them. It's not sufficient to praise charities and community groups; we must support them. And this is both a public obligation and a personal responsibility.

The War on Poverty established a Federal commitment to the poor. The welfare reform legislation of 1996 made that commitment more effective. For the task ahead, we must move to the third stage of combating poverty in America. Our society must enlist, equip, and empower idealistic Americans in the works of compassion that only they can provide.

Government has an important role. We will never be replaced by charities. My administration increases funding for major social welfare and poverty programs by 8 percent. Yet, Government must also do more to take the side of charities and community healers and support their work. We've had enough of the stale debate between big Government and indifferent Government. Government must be active enough to fund services for the poor and humble enough to let good people in local communities provide those services.

So I have created a White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. Through that office we are working to ensure that local community helpers and healers receive more Federal dollars, greater private support, and face fewer bureaucratic barriers. We have proposed a compassion capital fund that will match private giving with Federal dollars.

We have proposed allowing all taxpayers to deduct their charitable contributions, including non-itemizers. This could encourage almost 15 billion a year in new charitable giving. My attitude is, everyone in America, whether they are well-off or not, should have the same incentive and reward for giving.

And we're in the process of implementing and expanding charitable choice, the principle, already established in Federal law, that faith-based organizations should not suffer discrimination when they compete for contracts to provide social services. Government should never fund the teaching of faith, but it should support the good works of the faithful.

Some critics of this approach object to the idea of Government funding going to any group motivated by faith. But they should take a look around them. Public money already goes to groups like the Center for the Homeless and, on a larger scale, to Catholic Charities. Do the critics really want to cut them off? Medicaid and Medicare money currently goes to religious hospitals. Should this practice be ended? Childcare vouchers for low-income families are redeemed every day at houses of worship across America. Should this be prevented? Government loans send countless students to religious colleges. Should this be banned? Of course not.

America has a long tradition of accommodating and encouraging religious institutions when they pursue public goals. My administration did not create that tradition, but we will expand it to confront some urgent problems.

Today I am adding two initiatives to our agenda, in the areas of housing and drug treatment. Owning a home is a source of dignity for families and stability for communities, and organizations like Habitat for Humanity make that dream possible for many low-income Americans. Groups of this type currently receive some funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The budget I submit to Congress next year will propose a threefold increase in this funding which will expand homeownership and the hope and pride that come with it.

And nothing is more likely to perpetuate poverty than a life enslaved to drugs. So we've proposed 1.6 billion in new funds to close what I call the treatment gap, the gap between 5 million Americans who need drug treatment and the 2 million who currently receive it. We will also propose that all these funds—all of them—be opened to equal competition from faith-based and community groups.

The Federal Government should do all these things, but others have responsibilities, as well, including corporate America. Many corporations in America do good work in good causes. But if we hope to substantially reduce poverty and suffering in our country, corporate America needs to give more and to give better. Faith-based organizations receive only a tiny percentage of overall corporate giving. Currently, 6 of the 10 largest corporate givers in America explicitly rule out or restrict donations to faith-based groups, regardless

of their effectiveness. The Federal Government will not discriminate against faith-based organizations, and neither should corporate America.

In the same spirit, I hope America's foundations consider ways they may devote more of their money to our Nation's neighborhood and their helpers and their healers. I will convene a summit this fall, asking corporate and philanthropic leaders throughout America to join me at the White House to discuss ways they can provide more support to community organizations, both secular and religious.

Ultimately, your country is counting on each of you. Knute Rockne once said, "I have found that prayers work best when you have big players." [*Laughter*] We can pray for the justice of our country, but you're the big players we need to achieve it. Government can promote compassion; corporations and foundations can fund it; but the citizens—it's the citizens who provide it. A determined assault on poverty will require both an active Government and active citizens.

There is more to citizenship than voting—though I urge you to do it. [*Laughter*] There is more to citizenship than paying your taxes—though I'd strongly advise you to pay them. [*Laughter*] Citizenship is empty without concern for our fellow citizens, without the ties that bind us to one another and build a common good.

If you already realize this and you're acting on it, I thank you. If you haven't thought about it, I leave you with this challenge: Serve a neighbor in need, because a life of service is a life of significance; because materialism ultimately is boring, and consumerism can build a prison of wants; because a person who is not responsible for others is a person who is truly alone; because there are few better ways to express our love for America than to care for other Americans; and because the same God who endows us with individual rights also calls us to social obligations.

So let me return to Lyndon Johnson's charge. You're the generation that must decide: Will you ratify poverty and division with your apathy, or will you build a common good with your idealism? Will you be the spectator in the renewal of your country, or a citizen?

The methods of the past may have been flawed, but the idealism of the past was not an illusion. Your calling is not easy, because you must do the acting and the caring. But there is fulfillment in that sacrifice which creates hope for the rest of us. Every life you help proves that every life might be helped. The actual proves the possible. And hope is always the beginning of change.

Thank you for having me, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:48 p.m. in the Joyce Center, where he was awarded an honorary doctor of laws degree. In his remarks, he referred to the following University of Notre Dame officers: Rev. Edward A. Malloy, C.S.C., president; Patrick F. McCartan, chairman, board of trustees; Rev. Timothy R. Scully, C.S.C., executive vice president; Nathan O. Hatch, provost; Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C., president emeritus; and Rev. Edward P. Joyce, C.S.C., executive vice president emeritus. He also referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on United States Trade and Investment Policy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa and Implementation of the African Growth and Opportunity Act
May 18, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 106 of title I of the Trade and Development Act of 2000 (Public Law 106–200), I transmit herewith the 2001 Comprehensive Report of the President on U.S. Trade and Investment Policy toward Sub-Saharan Africa and Implementation of the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
May 18, 2001.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 21.

Commencement Address at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut
May 21, 2001

President Levin, thank you very much. Dean Brodhead; fellows of the Yale Corporation; fellow Yale parents, families, and graduates. It's a special privilege to receive this honorary degree. I was proud 33 years ago to receive my first Yale degree; I'm even prouder that, in your eyes, I've earned this one.

I congratulate my fellow honorees. I'm pleased to share this honor with such a distinguished group. I'm particularly pleased to be here with my friend the former President of Mexico. *Señor Presidente, usted es un verdadero lider y un gran amigo.*

I congratulate all the parents who are here. It's a glorious day when your child graduates from college. It's a great day for you; it's a great day for your wallet. [*Laughter*]

Most important, congratulations to the class of 2001. To those of you who received honors, awards, and distinctions, I say, well done. And to the C students I say, you, too, can be President of the United States. [*Laughter*] A Yale degree is worth a lot, as I often remind Dick Cheney—[*laughter*]—who studied here but left a little early. So now we know: If you graduate from Yale, you become President; if you drop out, you get to be Vice President. [*Laughter*]

I appreciate so very much the chance to say a few words on this occasion. I know Yale has a tradition of having no commencement speaker. I also know that you've carved out a single exception. Most people think that to speak at Yale's commencement, you have to be President. But over the years, the specifications have become far more demanding. Now you have to be a Yale graduate; you have to be President; and you have had to have lost the Yale vote to Ralph Nader.

This is my first time back here in quite a while. I'm sure that each of you will make your own journey back at least a few times in your life. If you're like me, you won't remember everything you did here. [*Laughter*] That can be a good thing. [*Laughter*] But there will be some people and some moments you will never forget.

Take, for example, my old classmate Dick Brodhead, the accomplished dean of

this great university. I remember him as a young scholar, a bright lad—[*laughter*]—a hard worker. We both put a lot of time in at the Sterling Library, in the reading room where they have those big leather couches. [*Laughter*] We had a mutual understanding. Dick wouldn't read aloud, and I wouldn't snore. [*Laughter*]

Our course selections were different, as we followed our own path to academic discovery. Dick was an English major and loved the classics. I loved history and pursued a diversified course of study. I like to think of it as the academic road less traveled. [*Laughter*]

For example, I took a class that studied Japanese haiku. Haiku, for the uninitiated, is a 15th-century form of poetry, each poem having 17 syllables. Haiku is fully understood only by the Zen masters. As I recall, one of my academic advisers was worried about my selection of such a specialized course. He said I should focus on English. [*Laughter*] I still hear that quite often. [*Laughter*] But my critics don't realize, I don't make verbal gaffes; I'm speaking in the perfect forms and rhythms of ancient haiku.

I did take English here, and I took a class called "The History and Practice of American Oratory," taught by Rollin G. Osterwies. And President Levin, I want to give credit where credit is due. I want the entire world to know this: Everything I know about the spoken word, I learned right here at Yale. [*Laughter*]

As a student, I tried to keep a low profile. It worked. Last year the New York Times interviewed John Morton Blum because the record showed I had taken one of his courses. Casting his mind's eye over the parade of young faces down through the years, Professor Blum said, and I quote, "I don't have the foggiest recollection of him." [*Laughter*]

But I remember Professor Blum. And I still recall his dedication and high standards of learning. In my time there were many great professors at Yale, and there still are. They're the ones who keep Yale going after the commencements, after we have all gone our separate ways. I'm not sure I remembered to thank them the last time I was here, but now that I have a second chance, I thank the professors of Yale University.

That's how I've come to feel about the Yale experience, grateful. I studied hard, I played hard, and I made a lot of lifelong friends. What stays with you from college is the part of your education you hardly ever notice at the time. It's the expectations and examples around you, the ideals you believe in, and the friends you make.

In my time, they spoke of the "Yale man." I was really never sure what that was, but I do think that I'm a better man because of Yale. All universities, at their best, teach that degrees and honors are far from the full measure of life. Nor is that measure taken in wealth or in titles. What matters most are the standards you live by, the consideration you show others, and the way you use the gifts you are given.

Now you leave Yale behind, carrying the written proof of your success here, at a college older than America. When I left here, I didn't have much in the way of a life plan. I knew some people who thought they did, but it turned out that we were all in for ups and downs, most of them unexpected. Life takes its own turns, makes its own demands, writes its own story, and along the way, we start to realize we are not the author. We begin to understand that life is ours to live but not to waste and that the greatest rewards are found in the commitments we make with our whole hearts—to the people we love and to the causes that earn our sacrifice. I hope that each of you will know these rewards. I hope you will find them in your own way and your own time.

For some, that might mean some time in public service. And if you hear that calling, I hope you answer. Each of you has unique gifts, and you were given them for a reason. Use them and share them. Public

service is one way, an honorable way, to mark your life with meaning.

Today I visit not only my alma mater but the city of my birth. My life began just a few blocks from here, but I was raised in west Texas. From there, Yale always seemed a world away, maybe a part of my future. Now it's a part of my past, and Yale, for me, is a source of great pride.

I hope that there will come a time for you to return to Yale to say that and to feel as I do. And I hope you won't wait as long.

Congratulations, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:05 p.m. on the Old Campus. In his remarks, he referred to Richard C. Levin, president, and Richard H. Brodhead, dean of Yale College, Yale University; former President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico; and Ralph Nader, 2000 Green Party Presidential candidate.

Statement on the 80th Anniversary of the Birth of Andrei Sakharov
May 21, 2001

Today we honor the memory of Andrei Sakharov on the 80th anniversary of his birth. Throughout his life, Andrei Sakharov served as a beacon of hope and inspiration for those who value peace and freedom, both in his native Russia and around the world. A gifted nuclear physicist, he became a powerful advocate for nuclear nonproliferation. Awarded his country's highest honors, he became best known for standing up to Soviet totalitarianism and becoming a powerful advocate for basic human rights and fundamental freedoms.

He did so at great personal cost. He endured prolonged harassment and forced internal exile in Gorky, where he was cut off from friends and family. But throughout his trials, Andrei Sakharov never wavered in his "fearless personal commitment in upholding the fundamental principles for peace"—a fact recognized by his Nobel Peace Prize citation in 1975. After he was allowed to return to public life, Sakharov became a prominent voice of democratic opposition and was elected to the Congress of People's Deputies, the Soviet Union's first democratically chosen body.

On today's anniversary, it is important for the international community to reflect on the great contributions Andrei Sakharov made to help advance the freedoms that all peoples of the world should rightfully enjoy. Unfortunately, too many people in too many parts of the world today do not enjoy these basic freedoms, and those who speak out on behalf of freedom are too often jailed, tortured, or murdered. Let us resolve to honor Andrei Sakharov's memory by continuing the struggle against these injustices.

Remarks to the Hispanic Scholarship Fund
May 22, 2001

Thank you. Please be seated. That's a pretty tough act to follow. [*Laughter*] Sara and I were honored this Sunday at Notre Dame. We both received honorary degrees. She probably deserved hers more than I deserved mine, but it was such an honor to be on the stage with her. What a wonderful lady, such a great inspiration, and

somebody who has made a concerted effort to make a difference in people's lives. It's really what America is about, when you think about it. I mean, the true strength of this country are people like Sara who are willing to say, "Let's get something done instead of sitting idly by and looking at depressing statistics, the statistic that not enough of our Hispanic youngsters are going to institutions of higher learning. Let's get something done about it, instead of hoping somebody else will pick up the initiative and get it done." Sara said, "I'm going to do it." And I want to thank you all for joining and supporting the Hispanic Scholarship Fund. It is important for our Nation's future that this fund be whole and active and fully funded.

I want to thank my friend Rudy Beserra for being here today, as well. Rudy—Mr. Chairman, it's good to see you, sir. And I understand that you will be hearing from Margaret LaMontagne after I say a few words.

Access is incredibly important. We must work as a society to extend the American Dream to *todos*—to everybody. Now, it starts with making sure youngsters understand that dream is available. And all of us need to help on making sure people understand the dream is available and the benefits of working hard to achieve the dream.

It also starts with making sure our public schools educate children. I would bet—I haven't seen any studies on this, but I would fully suspect that if a child is illiterate, relative to his or her classmates, it diminishes hope. And the dream that we all hope for, higher education, becomes smaller in the eyes of that child. If a person doesn't have the capacity that we all want that person to have, I suspect hope is in the far-distant future, if at all.

And so first things first means having an education system that provides hope by educating children, not a system that looks at hard-to-educate children, perhaps the *niños* of the first generation whose parents may not speak English, and say, "Oh, it's the easiest route to take, is just move them through the school system. The easiest thing for us to do is not to focus on each child but just move them through. If they're 12, we'll put everybody here. If they're 16, everybody goes there. And if they happen to learn to read, fine." That attitude is going to change. It's going to change by starting to ask the question around this country, what do you know? Do you know what you're supposed to know? And if you don't know what you're supposed to know, we as a society will come together to make sure you do early, before it's too late.

What Margaret will discuss with you is the bill that we've proposed here in Congress that lays out some clear principles about public education. One is, we ought to expect high standards. That means when people stand in front of a classroom full of Latino children, they expect the best. They know what all of us know, particularly Sara knows, that if you expect the best, you get good results. If you say, "Well, certain kids can't learn; it's too hard to teach them to speak English"—if you lower the bar, we get lousy results. And every child deserves better than that.

So, one of the principles is setting high standards and realizing every child can learn; secondly, is to pass power out of Washington to provide maximum flexibility for local districts to be able to chart the path to excellence for their individual school districts; and thirdly, and the core of reform, as far as I'm concerned, is to have strong accountability measures inherent in the school systems.

To put it more directly, if you receive Federal money to help a child, you need to show us whether or not the children are learning. If you received help, you show. And if you're doing the job we want you to be doing, there will be plenty of praise. But if not, if not, if we find out children aren't learning, something else has

to happen. We cannot continue to trap our children in schools that won't teach.

Now, we've got a couple of more initiatives that I think you'll find interesting. One is, I believe Head Start ought to be an early reading program, as well as the current strategy. And I think we ought to focus on making sure children are armed with the tools necessary to become good little readers. Unfortunately, not enough parents, or some parents, don't read to their kids. And so the schoolchildren are behind. Well, if we're going to have an accountability system starting in the third grade, we need to make sure we've got enough early education to get those children up to the starting line with every other child. And so the budget I submitted outlines triple the amount of money available for reading programs. Inherent in the program is K-through-2 diagnostic testing, so that we know if little children have got reading deficiencies, we'll correct them. The whole core of reform is—I ask the question, do our children know what they're supposed to know?

Now, there are some in our society who don't like the notion of accountability, who don't like to test. And I will resist that backward thinking with all my might, because I know what happens when you don't hold people accountable: Children are given up on. And that's not the American vision, as far as I'm concerned. I know it's not the American vision as far as you're concerned, as well.

In our budget, we also focus on ways to complement the work that you all do. We expand the monies available for Hispanic-serving institutions. And as importantly, I think you'll find that—this fact will, I think, bring some joy to your heart—that we expand the Pell grants available for low-income and middle-income students. Expanding the Pell grants is not a way to replace what you all are doing; it's a way to complement what you're doing. We want the—I can't say it enough—we want the American experience to be available for every child. And Pell grants is a good way to encourage access to higher education.

We expand the TRIO program in my budget. It's a program aimed at focusing on keeping children in school. We believe in education savings accounts. We give parents a tax incentive to save. And as I mentioned before, we're focused on making sure that the public schools do their job.

I am fixing to go talk to another group of Latino leaders about the Faith-Based Initiative, and I want to just share some thoughts with you about that. It's what I talked about when I was at Notre Dame, and it ties hand in hand with what we're trying to do.

On the one hand, we'll educate. On the other hand, we must inspire. And governments aren't very good at inspiring. We're kind of bureaucracies. The way to inspire a child is to convince somebody to be a mentor. The way to inspire somebody about America and its future and hope is for somebody to put an arm around a child and say, "I love you a lot. And America is meant for you, as well as anybody else." So we're talking about education today, but there's a different kind of education that our society must do, as well, and that's the education of helping somebody feel wanted.

First, our country must recognize there are some who are being left behind, and we've got to deal with it. That means more budgets, but it also means standing on the side of faith-based institutions who exist because they've heard the call to love a neighbor like they would like to be loved themselves and rally the great compassion of America.

I called on corporate America, when I was at Notre Dame, to do its job. I welcome corporate America here, doing your job by providing these scholarships. It's in your best interest to do so. It's also in our Nation's best interest that corporate America support faith-based programs that teach people love and compassion and hope.

Our country is a fabulous country. It is, mainly, because the people are so great. And our country is richer because of the Hispanic influence. I know; I came from a State that has a tremendous Hispanic influence. And I know I shouldn't say this: I happen to think it's the greatest State of all States, but partly because of our history and tradition and relationships in the Hispanic community.

We are one Nation under God, which means every child—every child—should be viewed as a precious individual. Every child should be educated, and no child should be left behind.

It is my honor to help kick off your conference. I can't thank you enough for what you do. For those generous souls who have contributed, thanks from the bottom of our Nation's heart. Keep doing it. And for Sara, thank you very much for having me a chance to come by.

God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:20 p.m. in the Indian Treaty Room in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Sara Martinez Tucker, president and chief executive officer, and Rudy M. Beserra, chairman, board of directors, Hispanic Scholarship Fund.

Remarks to Leaders of Hispanic Faith-Based Organizations
May 22, 2001

Thank you all. I now know why he's a Baptist preacher. [*Laughter*]

Thank you, Luis, and thank you, Jesse, and thank you all for coming. Before I say a few remarks, I want to introduce some folks. I appreciate so very much the Members from the United States Congress who are here, Ileana and Lincoln and Henry from the great State of Texas. Thank you so much for being here. It's a sign of unity that you're here, and I look forward to working with you to get the legislation through.

I reached into Philadelphia to ask a man to run the Office of the Faith-Based Initiative. Fortunately, John DiIulio, who is one of the advanced thinkers about how to help people, how the Nation should eradicate poverty, has joined my staff. What we're about to talk about is an incredibly serious effort to make sure that the American promise extends its reach in every neighborhood. And John is leading the office, and for that I am most grateful, John. Thank you very much. And Lisa Trevino Cummins is helping John, as well.

This is an important part of my administration, because I want the great hope of America to be existent in every household in our country. I worry about a society that could become divided between those who have and those who don't. I'm concerned about the fact that certain children are being left behind in America.

My vision includes everybody. It's described as compassionate conservatism, but I emphasize the compassion. The problem is, Government is not a very compassionate organization. We can fund—and we should—budgets; there is a lot of talk about budgets. We've submitted budgets that increase spending on social services. We've got what's called a compassion fund, that matches—a $500 million fund that will encourage faith-based initiatives throughout the country.

But the dilemma and the problem in the past has been that somewhere along the line, everybody thought Government could make people love one another. And that's not the way it works. And if part of the future of the country is to love a neighbor

like you would like to be loved yourself, it seems to follow, then, our Government must welcome, not discriminate against, faith-based organizations who are providing that.

I hope the Congress does not get caught up in the stale old process argument of the legalisms involved with encouraging organizations of faith to help people in need. Because, as Luis mentioned, there is precedent: We fund religious hospitals through Medicare and Medicaid; there is scholarship money for children to use at religious institutions. Why does it not follow, I asked the Congress and those folks who were elected, that we not allow faith-based programs to compete for taxpayers' money if the services they provide are necessary and the results are positive? The argument is, "Let us focus on the process." We're saying, "Let us focus on the results."

The way I like to put it—I gave a speech at Notre Dame last Sunday. It was a speech that said—it started with talking about President Lyndon Johnson's speech at the University of Texas kicking off the War on Poverty. It recognized that that War on Poverty had some positive effects. It also recognized, though, it had created a dependency on Government. It had a perverse effect.

So then the welfare law came along in 1996, signed by my predecessor—it had bipartisan support—that tried to address the concept of dependency upon Government. But we need to take it a step further, because there are still people who hurt and people whose lives are affected, people whose hearts need mending. Government must be active to fund the services but humble to recognize the power of neighborhood healers and helpers, humble to step aside when somebody can do a better job.

I've been so impressed by the faith-based leaders I've met all around our country, because there is a genuine commitment to the poor and the disadvantaged. And that's a commitment that we must channel and a commitment we must harvest. I used to say in the campaign, I look forward to rallying the soldiers and the armies of compassion. And I mean that.

Our Nation is so unique in this way: We are a nation of people who have heard a call to love a neighbor. We really are. I was sharing with the good leaders that came to visit me about the fact that everywhere I go people say, "Mr. President, I'm praying for you." They're not saying it's a Democrat prayer or a Republican prayer. [*Laughter*] It's just prayer. [*Laughter*]

It reminds me on a daily basis about the great hope and promise of America. It also reminds me how lucky I am to be the President of a great land, where people truly care about our country. It also reminds me about what Government ought to do: We ought to set money out there to encourage faith-based initiatives.

At the same time, we must never be so arrogant as to say, "You can't fulfill your mission if you access Federal money. Therefore, you have to change the entire mission of why you exist." I understand the frustrations with some in the faith-based community and the nervousness as they approach this issue. They say to themselves, "Why would I want to access Federal money if the Federal Government then tries to take away my mission, to take the cross off the wall or the Star of David off the wall? Why would I want to interface with a Government that's going to say, 'We'll reluctantly give you money and then force you to change your calling?' "

Well, I can understand that. And one of our commitments is that we will work tirelessly to make sure that bureaucracies don't stifle the very reason you exist in the first place and the power of your ministries, which is faith—which is faith.

And so my message to you is, thanks for what you're doing. You'll have a friend and an advocate in this administration that marches side by side—side by side—that we will do our very level best to make sure that the bureaucratic obstacles are

cleared and that people in need are able to get help.

In the course of the campaign, I've tried to explain what a faith-based initiative meant to many members of the press that followed me and, of course, many citizens. I'll never forget going to Colfax, Iowa, for a teen challenge program. You know, sometimes people accuse me of not being very articulate. [*Laughter*] English is my second language. [*Laughter*] But there was nothing more articulate than seeing a person who had been hooked on serious drugs stand up and explain to the Nation—at least those willing to listen—how he kicked drugs because faith had entered into his life.

It's hard to measure that. There is no formula for that. You can't write a regulation or a bureaucratic rule that suggests that that happened. But what Government can do is recognize its limitations and, more significantly, recognize the power of faith in our society. And that's what this initiative does. We don't pick religions. We don't fund religion. But we welcome the soldiers of the armies of compassion.

And to you soldiers, thank you so much for being here. Thank you for caring about our great land, and thank you for the service you provide on a daily basis.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:40 p.m. in Presidential Hall in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. Luis Cortes, president, Nueva Esperanza, and chairman, National Hispanic Religious Partnership; Rev. Dr. Jesse Miranda, president, *Alianza de Ministerios Evangélicos Nacionales* (AMEN); Representatives Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and Lincoln Diaz-Balart of Florida; and Representative Henry Bonilla of Texas.

Remarks at a Republican National Committee Gala
May 22, 2001

Thank you all very much. Mr. Vice President, thank you for that kind introduction. Governor Gilmore, thank you very much for agreeing to become the chairman of the Republican Party. Our party will thrive under your leadership, and we appreciate you doing this, sir.

I want to thank all the folks who worked so hard on this dinner tonight, Ann Wagner, Al Hoffman, Jeff and Nancy Marcus from the great State of Texas, all the table chairmen. Thank you so much for your generosity.

I'm honored to be able to say—to introduce the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Denny Hastert. Mr. Speaker, you and your team are doing a fantastic job.

I haven't seen Congressman Armey here, but I know Congressman DeLay is here, as are many other Members of the House of Representatives. I can assure you, knowing that we've got such a fine leadership team and a solid core in the House gives the Vice President and me a lot of comfort. And I can't tell you how joyous it is to work with this fine Speaker and the members of his team.

I would like to have introduced Majority Leader Lott, but he and the other Senators are working as hard as they can to get a meaningful, real tax relief package out of the United States Senate. It is time for the Senate to stop delaying tax relief. It is time to move the package on, for the good of the American people.

I'm so thankful that I did well at the altar. America is better off for it. We've got a fabulous First Lady in Laura Bush.

We came to your dinner last year, and I remember the warm welcome in the middle of a hard-fought campaign. A lot of things have changed since then. Last year I had to fly halfway across the country to get here. Today it took me 5 minutes. [*Laughter*] For another thing, I was running against the Vice President. This time around I brought a fantastic Vice President with me. And of course, it's a great joy to welcome Lynne Cheney, as well. The best decision I made in 2000 was to ask Dick Cheney to be my running mate.

I want to thank you all very much for your generous contributions so that my drive was only 5 minutes. [*Laughter*] I appreciate your support during the campaign, and I appreciate so very much your support to make sure our agenda gets advanced.

As well, there are members of my Cabinet who are here. I'm really proud of the men and women who decided to serve our country. It's a diverse group of folks who are dedicated to one proposition, a hopeful America. And if my Cabinet Secretaries would stand, I'd appreciate you recognizing them. [*Applause*]

And finally, I've assembled one of the finest staffs a President has ever put together, headed by Andy Card and National Security Adviser Rice, Karen Hughes and Karl Rove. All these folks work harmoniously. They do what's right for America, and our Nation should be proud that such fine citizens are willing to dedicate their life to this great country.

Laura and I have had the honor of living in the White House for 4 months and 2 days. That's already one-twelfth of a term, and we haven't wasted a day. I have visited 28 States and two countries. I met with 46 heads of state and more than 300 Members of the House and the Senate; four Cabinet meetings, one speech to Congress, not to mention a Cinco de Mayo festival, a gathering of Hall of Famers, celebrations for Saint Patrick's and Cuban Independence Day, and tee-ball.

It's been a joyous time for us in the White House and a high honor. And it's been a busy time, and that's just the way I like it. I often said during the campaign that Dick Cheney and I were not going to Washington just to mark time. We came to make good on our commitments for the great people of America. We came to get something done. We weren't afraid to state our case, nor were we afraid to work with anybody who heard our cause. We came not to have Washington change us but for us to change Washington.

And I think we started doing that in our own party. We welcome new faces, because ours is a philosophy that is conservative and compassionate. Ours is a philosophy that holds out hope for every single American, no matter what their background or their heritage may be.

We're also a party of principle and optimism. We believe strongly in our soul not in the supreme wisdom of Washington but in the wisdom of the American people. Ours is an administration, as America is coming to learn, that is not afraid to take on the tough issues confronting our country, that we're willing to—[*applause*].

I can remember during the campaign, and perhaps you all do as well, about the collective yawn from members in the Fourth Estate about tax relief. People used to say, "Well, he's just saying that because it might make good politics." No, Dick Cheney and I talked about tax relief because we thought it was right for the country. This Nation can afford tax relief, and we can't afford not to have it, with our economy slowing down.

And we're making good progress. We're making good progress. I believe we convinced Congress to cut the rates on everybody who pays taxes. We've eliminated this business about the Congress getting to pick and choose who the winners and losers are in the Tax Code. Our philosophy was fair and decent, and it said loud and clear, "If you pay taxes in America, you ought to get tax relief." We believe we ought to

do something about the marriage penalty. And we believe, once and for all, we need to get rid of the death tax in the Tax Code. Again Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for your—for working with us on this issue.

Ours is an administration that's willing to talk openly about Social Security reform. Many candidates and politicians and others who have been elected to office never wanted to talk about Social Security. It was called the third rail of American politics. This is an administration that knows we'd better make sure Social Security is reformed, safe, and solvent for the older generation, around for the younger generation. And we'll seize the moment to get it done.

Ours is an administration that recognized our Nation has an energy problem, and we laid out solutions to do something about it. I'm sure that maybe some other administration has talked about energy, but we put out a concrete, specific plan, with over 100 recommendations—100 proposals—to ease the burden on the American working people.

Our plan starts with wise conservation, the use of technology to make sure that we are better stewards of our energy. But California has taught us a lesson: The State with the second best record of conservation is a State which ran out of energy. And so we need additional supplies. We need reliable supplies. We need a balanced approach to our energy. We need clean coal technology and natural gas exploration, safe nuclear power, as well as alternative sources of energy.

And finally, we must face up to the problem that we're having problems getting energy from the powerplant to the light switch. We need to modernize our infrastructure. No, ours is an administration that won't simply look at a problem; we'll address it in a concrete, specific way.

We need to have better language when it comes to energy. I mean, the people of this country have somehow been told that you're either for the environment and against energy policy, or you're for an energy policy or against the environment. That's the old way of thinking. That's stale old-style politics. You and I know it's not either/or; with good, sound policy, it's both. We can increase our energy supplies so the people can find work, and we can protect our environment at the same time.

Ours is an administration that's also pushing a compassionate conservative vision. It starts with making sure that every child is educated in America. We've laid out a bill that we're working on in the Congress right now that talks about sound, solid principles to make sure that not one child gets left behind. It begins by setting high standards for every child.

Ours is an administration that believes that every child can learn. And we refuse to accept low standards, because we understand low standards means lousy results for children all across the country.

Ours is an administration that trusts the local people to chart the path to excellence.

And ours is an administration that insists upon results. We want to know. We want to know whether our children are learning to read and write and add and subtract. And if they are, we'll praise the teachers. But if not, we'll demand something else happens for those children. There are no second-rate children in this great land of ours, and there are no second-rate dreams, as far as we're concerned.

We've taken on a different task when it comes to welfare reform. I strongly believe that this Nation must rally the armies of compassion which exist in every neighborhood in America. The reason I believe that is because I understand the true strength of our country. It's not in the halls of Government; it's in the hearts and souls of loving citizens. I understand cultures and societies change one heart, one soul, one conscience at a time. And Government can fund, but what Government can't do is cause people to love one another.

Perhaps the most important initiative of all of the Bush/Cheney administration is to push a Faith-Based Initiative that says loud

and clear: Government will never fund religion, but Government will stand side by side with the soldiers in the armies of compassion to make sure lost souls are found, to make sure wanting children have somebody to love them in the form of a mentor.

No question, this is an ambitious agenda, but it's exactly what the Vice President and I told the American people we would do. You know, Washington is a place with many temptations, and one of them is to settle in and just go along and forget about the commitments you made during the course of a campaign. But this is an administration which will keep its word, and we expect others to do so, as well. We may not always agree, but hopefully, we can be honest with each other and respect each other and change the tone of Washington, DC, so that when people look at the Nation's Capital, they will be proud of what they see.

Changing the tone of our Nation's Capital hasn't been easy. I realize that in politics, old ways die hard. Washington at times has got a plenty sharp edge to it. The only thing I can do and the only thing Dick Cheney and others in our administration can do is to control our own responses. When I hear my policies and my nominees attacked in a hostile and partisan way, I simply hear the echoes of an era behind us. I'm not going to take the bait. I'm going to lead this country to a new level of respect. I came to this town to change the tone of the Capital, and I'm not going to quit.

You know, Mark Twain used to say, "Always do right. This will gratify some of the people and astonish the rest." [*Laughter*] We're going to do the right thing. We're going to pass an agenda that focuses on the American people. We will share credit for success, because we understand the best politics is good public policy.

I think our good party will have a strong record of accomplishment to run on. The people of this country will be able to say, "We elected them. They went to Washington. They did what they said they were going to do, and the people are better off for it."

I also think the people of our country will be able to look at their Nation's Capital and begin to see a group of folks working hard to usher in a period of personal responsibility, a period in our country when everybody understands that each of us are responsible for the decisions we make in life. It starts with those who are fortunate enough to be a mom or a dad—that each of us must understand our primary job, our primary focus must be to love our children with all their hearts and all our souls.

The responsibility era says that each of us must be responsible for what we say and what we do. And a period of personal responsibility understands that we must love a neighbor just like we'd like to love themselves. I'm absolutely convinced we're on our way to ushering in this new culture, and I believe America will be better for it. And I'm honored to be the President during the period of time when this Nation will realize its full potential.

Thank you all for having me. God bless you all, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:53 p.m. at the D.C. Armory. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. James S. Gilmore III of Virginia, chairman, Ann Wagner, cochair, and Al Hoffman, Jr., finance chair, Republican National Committee; and Jeff Marcus, gala chair, and his wife, Nancy.

Remarks at a Military Reenlistment Ceremony
May 23, 2001

I don't know if the Commander in Chief is allowed to say this, but I'm going to anyway: At ease. [*Laughter*]

Mr. Secretary, thank you very much for your service to the country. It's fitting that he is here today, because a few months ago, Secretary Rumsfeld re-upped himself. [*Laughter*] And the Nation is better off for it. General Shelton, thank you for being here. Joint Chiefs, thank you all for coming; family and friends.

Before I begin my remarks, I want to take note of a major event that took place today in the United States Senate. Just a little over an hour ago, the United States Senate, in an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote, voted to give the tax relief to the American people. The House of Representatives has already voted in favor of tax relief. So I'm pleased to report today that tax relief is on the way.

I want to congratulate the 62 Senators who voted for this important measure. Senator Lott and Senator Grassley, Senator Baucus, Senator Miller, and Senator Breaux led the way in giving this victory to the American people. And they deserve our country's thanks and praise.

The economy needs a shot in the arm, so I call on the House and the Senate to reach an agreement on the final tax relief package this week. The sooner the Congress completes its work, the sooner the American people will have their own money in their own pockets to save and invest as they see fit. Our economy cannot afford any further delays.

And now to the task at hand. I am so appreciative that General Shelton and the other leaders of the military are here. The men and women now know how proud you are of their decision to take another tour of duty. And I'm proud, too. And I welcome you all to the White House.

For two centuries this house has been the final point of decision in the chain of command. Here President Wilson decided that American soldiers would have to go to Europe to fight in World War I. Here Franklin Roosevelt first learned of the attack at Pearl Harbor, and within days, America began a 4-year war in two theaters. Here four modern Presidents dealt with the struggle in Vietnam, from beginning to end.

Every major military operation of the last 200 years was set in motion at the White House. The circumstances have varied greatly, but no President has ever had reason to doubt the ability and commitment of the American Armed Forces. You have shown that commitment today. Like many thousands of others who will reenlist this year, you've done yourselves credit, and you've paid your country a high tribute. The choice was yours to make, and you volunteered again, and your country is very grateful.

Our military depends on reenlistment. This is especially true now, as military technology and equipment grow more complex and more demanding. Perhaps more than ever, the success of our all-volunteer force requires that we keep the best people, the most experienced technicians, and mature leaders of the highest caliber. That is what America gains with each one of you who stays.

In return, America owes you every ounce of support you need to carry out your daily mission. When reenlistment declines, that's usually a sign that such support is missing. I have promised never to let that support waver, never to take you for granted. As long as I live under this roof, our country and our military will be prepared to meet any challenge the future may bring.

For many of you, the decision to reenlist wasn't made alone. You all know the saying:

Soldiers enlist, but families reenlist. [*Laughter*] And we have many family members here. You're not taking an oath, but you're making an important commitment. And along the way, all of you have made your share of sacrifices. And I appreciate the chance to thank you for it. When I speak of supporting the military, that means family members as well, the bases you call home, and the schools where you send your children.

For those who are about to take the oath, congratulations. You repeat some familiar words. You will do so with self-assurance that you might not have had the first time, that comes with hard work and discipline and service to our country. I want each of you to return to your posts with the knowledge that you have my gratitude and full confidence. Thank you again.

And now it is my honor to turn over the proceedings to General Shelton, who will administer the oath of office.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:30 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Education Reform Legislation
May 23, 2001

I commend the House of Representatives for taking a giant step toward improving America's public schools. The education reforms adopted today build on the principles of accountability, flexibility, local control, and greater choices for parents. The reforms require annual testing of students in grades three through eight, give States unprecedented flexibility to meet critical education needs and, for the first time, tie Federal education funding to results. These education reforms also give parents real options to get their children out of persistently failing schools through public school choice with transportation provided, and supplemental services such as tutoring and summer school. I look forward to working with Members of the House and Senate to make sure this vital legislation becomes law so that no child in America is left behind.

Message to the Congress on Additional Measures Prohibiting the Importation of Rough Diamonds From Sierra Leone
May 23, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to section 204(b) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(b) (IEEPA), and section 301 of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1631, I hereby report that I have exercised my statutory authority to expand the scope of an existing national emergency in response to the unusual and extraordinary threat posed to the foreign policy of the United States by the Government of Liberia's complicity in the illicit trade in diamonds from Sierra Leone by the insurgent Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF) and by the Government of Liberia's other forms of support for the RUF. I also have exercised my statutory authority to issue an Executive Order that

prohibits the importation into the United States of all rough diamonds from Liberia, whether or not such diamonds originated in Liberia. These actions are mandated in part by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1343 of March 7, 2001.

The Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, is authorized to issue regulations in exercise of my authorities under the IEEPA and the United Nations Participation Act, 22 U.S.C. 287c, to implement this prohibition. All Federal agencies are also directed to take actions within their authority to carry out the provisions of the Executive Order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued. The Order was effective at 12:01 a.m. eastern daylight time on May 23, 2001.

I have authorized these measures in furtherance of Executive Order 13194 of January 18, 2001, and in response to the Government of Liberia's continuing facilitation of and participation in the RUF's illicit trade in diamonds from Sierra Leone and its other forms of support for the RUF. The Government of Liberia's actions in this regard constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States because they directly challenge United States foreign policy objectives in the region and the rule-based international order that is crucial to the peace and prosperity of the United States.

In Executive Order 13194, President Clinton responded to the RUF's illicit arms-for-diamonds trade that fuels the brutal, decade-long civil war in Sierra Leone by declaring a national emergency and, consistent with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1306, by prohibiting the importation into the United States of all rough diamonds from Sierra Leone except for those importations controlled through the certificate of origin regime of the Government of Sierra Leone. In a report issued on December 14, 2000, the United Nations Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 1306 found that diamonds represent a major and primary source of income for the RUF to sustain and advance its military activities; that the bulk of the RUF diamonds leaves Sierra Leone through Liberia; and that such illicit trade cannot be conducted without the permission and involvement of Liberian government officials at the highest levels. The Panel recommended, among other things, a complete embargo on all diamonds from Liberia until Liberia demonstrates convincingly that it is no longer involved in the trafficking of arms to, or diamonds from, Sierra Leone.

On March 7, 2001, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1343 to impose sanctions against the Government of Liberia. The resolution determined that the Government of Liberia's active support for the RUF in Sierra Leone and other armed rebel groups in neighboring countries constitutes a threat to international peace and security in the region and decided that all states shall impose an immediate arms embargo on Liberia and also shall impose travel and diamond bans on Liberia on May 7, 2001, unless the Council determined before that date that the Government of Liberia had ceased its support for the RUF and for other armed rebel groups and, in particular, had taken a number of concrete steps identified in the resolution. In furtherance of this resolution, the Secretaries of State, Commerce, and Defense have taken steps, under their respective authorities, to implement the arms embargo.

With regard to the travel ban and diamond embargo, the Government of Liberia has failed, notwithstanding the two-month implementation period granted by resolution 1343, to honor its commitments to cease its support for the RUF and other armed rebel groups. As a result, the Security Council did not determine that Liberia has complied with the demands of the Council.

In Proclamation 7359 of October 10, 2000, President Clinton suspended the entry as immigrants and nonimmigrants of

persons who plan, engage in, or benefit from activities that support the RUF or that otherwise impede the peace process in Sierra Leone. The application of that Proclamation implements the travel ban imposed by resolution 1343.

Finally, for the reasons discussed above and in the enclosed Executive Order, I also have found that the Government of Liberia's continuing facilitation of and participation in the RUF's illicit trade in diamonds from Sierra Leone and its other forms of support for the RUF contribute to the unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States described in Executive Order 13194 with respect to which the President declared a national emergency. In order to deal with that threat, and consistent with resolution 1343 and this finding, I have taken action to prohibit the importation into the United States of all rough diamonds from Liberia, whether or not such diamonds originated there, in order to contribute to the international effort to bring a prompt end to the illicit arms-for-diamonds trade by which the RUF perpetuates the tragic conflict in Sierra Leone. This action, as well as those discussed above, also expresses our outrage at the Government of Liberia's ongoing contribution to human suffering in Sierra Leone and other neighboring countries, as well as its continuing failure to abide by international norms and the rule of law.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
May 23, 2001.

NOTE: The Executive order of May 22 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks to the St. Augustine Parish Community in Cleveland, Ohio
May 24, 2001

Father McNulty, thank you very much, sir, for your hospitality and your introduction. It's a privilege for me to be here with Bishop Pilla, whose reputation at least has preceded him as far as the President goes. I've been looking forward for this opportunity to meet such a fine, noble man, firmly committed to helping the poor. So, Bishop, thank you so much for being here, sir.

I'm honored also to be—to have been welcomed by Sister Ambroe. The Sister is pretty firm in her—[*laughter*]—she kept us on time. [*Laughter*] I am thankful to be here with distinguished public servants from the State of Ohio, your Governor, Lieutenant Governor, both very good friends of mine. Thank you all for being here. Two fine United States Senators, Mike DeWine and George Voinovich, traveled with me from Washington today. I think you're going back. [*Laughter*] But Ohio is well represented in the Halls of the United States Senate with these two fine Americans. And two Members of the United States Congress, Steve LaTourette and Tony Hall from south Ohio, are here as well. Thank you all for traveling with us today.

Tony is not from this area, but I can assure you that if you got to know him, you would know that he shares the same passion most of us do for figuring out ways to help people in need. The other thing that I want to make note of is that Tony is a Democrat. And what we're going to talk about today is not a party issue. The idea of helping people transcends political party. And so, Tony, thank you for coming.

I want to thank Pam Delly, the principal of Our Lady of Angels, for the tour and the opportunity to meet the students here.

And I want to thank Dennis McNulty, the director of Catholic Charity Services, as well.

I want to start off with a comment about some news. This morning a distinguished United States Senator chose to leave the Republican Party and become an independent. I respect Senator Jeffords. But I respectfully—but respectfully, I couldn't disagree more. Our agenda for reforming America's public schools and providing tax relief for every taxpayer represents the hopes and dreams of Main Street America. Our agenda for reforming our military and modernizing our military to defend America and our allies represents the best hope for peace.

I was elected to get things done on behalf of the American people and to work with both Republicans and Democrats, and we're doing just that. Just yesterday in the United States Senate, Republicans and Democrats overwhelmingly agreed that we should provide tax relief for every single American who pays taxes. The Senate has now passed tax relief, and so has the House. And I call on Congress not to recess for Memorial Day until they have finished the job and provided tax relief for the American people.

And we're making great progress on education, as well. Just yesterday in the House of Representatives, Republicans and Democrats overwhelmingly agreed that we should insist upon local control of schools, strong accountability, and greater options for parents when their children are trapped in failing schools. The Senate now takes up the education bill, and I'm confident we'll enact a plan to improve all of America's public schools so that no child is left behind. As well, as I mentioned, I'm working hard with both Republicans and Democrats to put in place a Faith-Based Initiative that I truly believe will change America for the better.

Last weekend I spoke at one of America's great Catholic universities. The chairman of the board, I think, is here somewhere. Here you are. Thank you very much, Pat, for letting me come. I was deeply honored. Today I'm pleased to visit one of America's great Catholic parishes. Notre Dame and St. Augustine may seem to be a world apart, but they're united by the same Catholic teaching, that God has a special concern for the poor. For some people, Jesus' admonition to care for the least of these is an admirable moral teaching. For the folks at this center, and centers like it all around America, it's a way of life.

I'm visiting here to offer praise. I want to praise the volunteers. I want to praise the good folks from corporate Cleveland who are helping. I want to praise those like the folks we met in the cafeteria, who get up at 6 in the morning, before their job, to come and help a neighbor in need. I also want to make a pledge that my administration will be more supportive of the good works done here than any administration in the history of the country, because I understand the power of faith, that faith can change lives.

I also understand the limitations of Government. Government can hand out money, and we will. We've increased budgets to work on social problems. But what Government cannot do is put hope in people's hearts or a sense of purpose in people's lives.

I wish—I wish I knew the law that says, love a neighbor like you would like to be loved yourself. I'd sign it, that would mandate that to happen. But I think of all nations of the world, we understand that that law comes from a higher calling than Government. And the great challenge for our Nation is to rally what I call the armies of compassion all across America so that nobody is left behind.

In my speech at Notre Dame, I started by talking about a speech that a former President from Texas gave in 1964, and he declared a War on Poverty. I then talked about some of the unintended effects of the War on Poverty, one of which

was people becoming dependent upon Government. It's kind of a loss of responsibility in our society. Members of both political parties came together in 1996 to address that problem by putting time limits on welfare. The bill was signed by my predecessor, and it had a positive effect. But there are still people who hurt in America.

Poverty runs deep in this country, and we need to take the War on Poverty a step further by recognizing the power and promise of faith-based and community-based groups that exist not because of Government but because they've heard the universal call to love somebody in need.

And so we've laid out an initiative for the United States Congress to look at. It's one that says we're going to have a—what's called a compassion capital fund of a half a billion dollars to help provide seed money for programs such as these we're witnessing here today. It says we ought to expand charitable choice, which means faith-based organizations should be allowed to receive Federal grants when it comes to helping people in need.

There's some concern in our society about encouraging faith-based organizations to meet their challenges. But those are people that want to argue the process. They want to make everything legal. And my fundamental question to America, after having said this loud and clear, "We'll never fund faith, we'll never fund churches, but we should fund the armies of compassion"—we should not discriminate against faith-based programs which exist to help people in need. We provide Medicare and Medicaid money, and that money is redeemed at charitable hospitals. We provide Pell grants and Government loans for people that redeem that—those scholarship monies at religious universities. In order to make sure the promise of America is full and whole for every citizen, we should not discriminate against faith-based programs that simply exist and solely exist to help people who hurt and people in need. The neighborhood helpers and healers of America are truly the strength of this country.

In my speech at Notre Dame, I also talked about corporate America. And to this end, I'm going to have a convocation next fall calling together foundation America and corporate America to figure out a strategy of how best to get more money into the coffers of the faith-based programs in neighborhoods all across America.

Interestingly enough, 6 of 10 of the largest corporate givers in America explicitly rule out giving money to faith-based programs. My attitude is: America and its Government should not discriminate against faith-based programs, and neither should corporate America. And so one of my missions is to bring folks who care about our country together and tout and herald the great works that are being done in programs such as this and centers such as this.

I've set up an office at the White House, run by a man named John DiIulio. He's a—one of the forward thinkers in terms of how we encourage faith to help people in need. He's a really interesting guy—I haven't checked his party affiliation, but I suspect it's not the same as mine—because he understands that this is not an initiative to try to gain political gain. Ours is an initiative to make America a better place.

Part of the mission of the office is to encourage programs to explain how people can access the Federal grant money, explain what we can do with the capital compassion fund. But part of it all, and a very important part, is to make sure that Government never interferes with the good works that are being done in programs such as this. It's to make sure that church and synagogue and mosque don't lose the fundamental essence of their mission.

You know, there are many in our society who fear what interfacing with the Federal Government can mean. And my pledge to the faith-based community in America is, my administration will do everything in our power to make sure that those who do interface with Government never have to

sacrifice their mission, their reason for being, because, again, I understand the power of faith and the hope faith brings all across the country.

It is an incredible honor to be the President of a nation of faith. It's hard to describe what it's like to travel our country and have literally hundreds of people walk up and say, "Mr. President, I pray for you every day." It is—first of all, it's a very comforting feeling, needless to say. But it also increases my optimism and hope about America because the truth of the matter is, in order for us to solve the deep poverty that exists, to solve the hurt in people's souls, we need people who are willing to put their arm around a brother in need and say, "I love you." We need mentors for young children to provide hope and solace. America's society will change one heart, one soul, one conscience at a time. And each of us must do our part to provide hope for that soul and that conscience.

I've been so incredibly impressed by the universal and strong commitment of the Catholic Church and the leaders of the Catholic Church to make sure that nobody in our society is left behind. America is better off because of that commitment. Our Nation is well-off because of the love and compassion of our citizens. And my hope, in working with folks such as yourself, is to gather that compassion so that the hope of the greatest Nation of the world reaches every neighborhood in America.

Thank you for giving me the chance to come, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:35 a.m. at the Our Lady of Angels/St. Joseph Center. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. Joseph D. McNulty, pastor, St. Augustine Church; Bishop Anthony M. Pilla, Bishop of Cleveland; Sister Corita Ambroe, C.S.J., executive director of programs, St. Augustine Hunger Center; Gov. Bob Taft and Lt. Gov. Maureen O'Connor of Ohio; and Patrick F. McCartan, chairman, board of trustees, University of Notre Dame.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergencies With Respect to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)

May 24, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the national emergencies declared with respect to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) (the "FRY (S&M)") in 1992 and with respect to Kosovo in 1998, are to continue beyond May 30, 2001, and June 9, 2001, respectively. The most recent notice continuing these emergencies was published in the *Federal Register* on May 26, 2000.

With respect to the 1992 national emergency, on December 27, 1995, President Clinton issued Presidential Determination 96–7, directing the Secretary of the Treasury, *inter alia*, to suspend the application of sanctions imposed on the FRY (S&M) and to continue to block property previously blocked until provision is made to address claims or encumbrances, including

the claims of the other successor states of the former Yugoslavia. This sanctions relief, in conformity with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1022 of November 22, 1995 (hereinafter the "Resolution"), was an essential factor motivating Serbia and Montenegro's acceptance of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina initialed in Dayton on November 21, 1995, and signed in Paris on December 14, 1995 (hereinafter the "Peace Agreement").

Sanctions against both the FRY (S&M) and the Bosnian Serbs were subsequently terminated by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1074 of October 1, 1996. This termination, however, did not end the requirement of the Resolution that those blocked funds and assets that are subject to claims and encumbrances remain blocked, until unblocked in accordance with applicable law.

Until the status of all remaining blocked property is resolved, the Peace Agreement implemented, and the terms of the Resolution met, this situation continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that the 1992 emergency, and the measures adopted pursuant thereto, must continue beyond May 30, 2001.

With respect to the 1998 national emergency regarding Kosovo, on January 17, 2001, President Clinton issued Executive Order 13192 in view of the peaceful democratic transition begun in the FRY (S&M); the continuing need to promote full implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 827 of May 25, 1993, and subsequent resolutions calling for all states to cooperate fully with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY); the illegitimate control over FRY (S&M) political institutions and economic resources or enterprises exercised by former President Slobodan Milosevic, his close associates and other persons, and those individuals' capacity to repress democracy or perpetrate or promote further human rights abuses; and the continuing threat to regional stability and implementation of the Peace Agreement. The order lifts and modifies, with respect to future transactions, most of the economic sanctions imposed against the FRY (S&M) in 1998 and 1999 with regard to the situation in Kosovo. At the same time, the order imposes restrictions on transactions with certain persons described in section 1(a) of the order, namely Slobodan Milosevic, his close associates and supporters and persons under open indictment for war crimes by ICTY. The order also provides for the continued blocking of property or interests in property blocked prior to the order's effective date due to the need to address claims or encumbrances involving such property.

Because the crisis with respect to the situation in Kosovo and with respect to Slobodan Milosevic, his close associates and supporters and persons under open indictment for war crimes by ICTY has not been resolved, and because the status of all previously blocked property has yet to be resolved, this situation continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that the emergency declared with respect to Kosovo, and the measures adopted pursuant thereto, must continue beyond June 9, 2001.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,

May 24, 2001.

NOTE: The notice of May 24 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the National Emergencies With Respect to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)
May 24, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c) and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) emergency declared in Executive Order 12808 on May 30, 1992, and with respect to the Kosovo emergency declared in Executive Order 13088 on June 9, 1998.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
May 24, 2001.

Statement on Signing the Animal Disease Risk Assessment, Prevention, and Control Act of 2001
May 24, 2001

Today I am signing into law S. 700, the "Animal Disease Risk Assessment, Prevention, and Control Act of 2001." The Act is intended to assist the Department of Agriculture in its continuing efforts to protect against introduction into the United States of two unrelated animal diseases occurring abroad—bovine spongiform encephalopathy and foot-and-mouth disease. Preventing such diseases from entering the United States is a high priority, and the Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with other Federal agencies, has put strong measures in place designed to accomplish that goal.

Section 3 of the bill requires the Secretary of Agriculture to submit to certain committees and subcommittees of the Congress a preliminary report concerning any immediate needs for additional legislative authority or appropriations and a final report with recommendations for legislation that will improve efforts to assess, prevent, or control transmission of certain diseases. Section 3 will be interpreted in a manner consistent with the constitutional authority of the President to recommend to the consideration of the Congress such measures as the President shall judge necessary and expedient.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
May 24, 2001.

NOTE: S. 700, approved May 24, was assigned Public Law No. 107–9. This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 25.

Commencement Address at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland
May 25, 2001

Thank you very much. Thank you, all. Secretary England, thank you very much. For those of you who don't know this, he was sworn in at noon yesterday, just to be here as the Secretary of the Navy. I'm proud to have this good man serving our country.

Admiral Clark, thank you very much. General Jones, Admiral Ryan, members of the board of visitors, Members of the United States Congress, distinguished faculty, distinguished guests, family, and friends, and most of all, graduating midshipmen of the class of 2001.

It is a tremendous honor for me to stand before the future of the United States Navy and the United States Marine Corps. You'll always remember this commencement day, a day of excitement, pomp, circumstance; tears of joy and relief when the speaker finally stops speaking. [*Laughter*] When I accepted the invitation to speak here, I asked Admiral Clark, fine man that he is, if he had any thoughts on what I should talk about. He said, "Mr. President, you should talk about 20 minutes." [*Laughter*] So we'll see how I do.

I bring with me a small graduation present. In keeping with long-standing tradition, I hereby absolve all midshipmen who are on restriction for minor conduct offenses. [*Laughter*] It seems a lot of you are cheering. [*Laughter*] I leave it to Admiral Ryan to define exactly what "minor" means. [*Laughter*]

Your class has so much to be proud of. You've endured the physical shakedown of your plebe summer and the academic shock of your plebe year. You've endured sea trials and the trial of the Herndon climb. You've slept in rooms adorned with brass plaques that remind you of predecessors whose chests were adorned with Medals of Honor. You've worshipped in a chapel engraved with the words "*Non Sibi, Sed Patriae*"—not for self, but for country. You've studied in buildings named after giants: Nimitz, Sampson, Mahan, and Michelson. And just in case the studying wasn't enough, some of you gave the left-handed salute to Tecumseh, the "god of 2.0." [*Laughter*] They didn't have that statue where I went to school. [*Laughter*] I wish they had. [*Laughter*]

No one made you come here. No one made you stay, and no one made you to subject yourself to a code of honor and a life of discipline, but you did. And your President and your country are so very grateful and proud that you have chosen to serve.

We all know that you did not arrive at this day by yourselves. You had a lot of help. And at the top of this list must go your parents, and I'd like to congratulate them, as well. The class of 2001, you launch yourself into what we all hope will be fair winds and following seas. It's a good time to reflect for a moment on the things that change and the things that never change.

Today I'm going to talk about the changing world you're entering and the enduring values you'll bring to it. Presenting the "butter bars" to the class of 2001 will be four flag officers from the Naval Academy class of 1951, Admirals Burkhalter, Dunn, McKee, and Metcalf. We're so honored to have them here, as well as a true modern day hero, and your former Superintendent, Admiral Bill Lawrence.

The class of '51 and the class of '01 are separated by 50 years, but you have much in common. You exhibit the same patriotism, the same professionalism, and the same drive. And let's not forget, both classes beat Army.

Half a century ago, the class of '51 ventured into a world where the very existence of our Nation seemed to hang in the balance. Thanks in part to their service and sacrifice, the values of democratic freedom prevailed throughout some 40 winters of a cold war.

Today, you inherit a world that is safer and more peaceful, a world the class of '51 helped to make possible. You're the custodians of their legacy, the next link in the long, unbroken chain that is Annapolis past and present. The world you're entering today is different from the one they entered in five decades ago. But it's still dangerous. It still requires America to have a forward strategy for freedom. The Navy-Marine Corps team you're about to join as new officers will be an integral part of that strategy.

Today, nearly one-third of our naval forces are forward-deployed overseas. The U.S.S. *Constellation* carrier battle group and its 10,000 sailors are plying the waters of the Persian Gulf, enforcing the no-fly zone over southern Iraq. Another 3,800 sailors and marines stand guard nearby with the Boxer amphibious ready group, deterring any mischief Saddam might contemplate. The U.S.S. *Enterprise* is in the Mediterranean, along with the Kearsarge amphibious ready group. They're supporting NATO efforts to maintain peace in the Balkans and deterring those who would break the peace. And in the Pacific, the U.S.S. *Kitty Hawk* is on call, ready, if needed, to defend America's interests.

These forces are America's insurance policy in a world of change and challenge. They give comfort to our allies and pause to our enemies and adversaries. America today has the finest Navy and Marine Corps the world has ever seen. And with your help, I am committing to ensuring that we have the world's finest Navy and Marine Corps tomorrow and every day after.

To do so, we must build forces that draw upon the revolutionary advances in the technology of war that will allow us to keep the peace by redefining war on our terms. I'm committed to building a future force that is defined less by size and more by mobility and swiftness, one that is easier to deploy and sustain, one that relies more heavily on stealth, precision weaponry, and information technologies.

Fifteen years from now, as many of you approach the point of command, a President may stand here and describe a far different range of deployments than the one I just gave. He—or she—may speak of Aegis destroyers protecting entire continents from the threat of ballistic missile attack; modified Trident submarines carrying hundreds of next-generation smart conventional cruise missiles; agile Marine task forces ready to deploy with far greater speed, operational reach, and precision than ever before; and global command and control systems providing near-total battlespace awareness in real time to on-the-scene commanders.

Building tomorrow's force is not going to be easy. Changing the direction of our military is like changing the course of a mighty ship—all the more reason for more research and development and all the more reason to get started right away. Yet, building a 21st century military will require more than new weapons. It will also require a renewed spirit of innovation in our officer corps. We cannot transform our military using old weapons and old plans. Nor can we do it with an old bureaucratic mindset that frustrates the creativity and entrepreneurship that a 21st century military will need.

The world around us is made smaller every day by the powers of science and technology. These forces of change are transforming every field, from business and communications to health and culture. As the newest officers in our military, your leadership challenge is to embrace those forces, so that you might shape them and harness them to build the security of our country. Only by accepting this challenge

will you be able to see over the horizon and to develop the new concepts and applications that our Navy will need in the decades to come.

It is this spirit of innovation that, in the late twenties, allowed a visionary like Admiral Marc Mitscher to truly understand the potential power of putting an airplane on a ship. He and other great pioneers perfected in less than 20 years the doctrine, technology, and tactics of naval aviation that would win the war in the Pacific.

That same decade, the spirit of innovation allowed a smart marine major named Pete Ellis to understand that such a war would require the ability to land men and heavy equipment from a ship. So he spent the better part of his career developing the doctrine of amphibious warfare. The marines at Iwo Jima and Inchon were thankful he did.

The same spirit led Admiral Hyman Rickover, in the fifties, to the insight that the nuclear genie could be bottled to allow our submarines to stay underwater for months at a time. It led Admiral "Red" Raborn to understand how to put a nuclear missile on a submarine. And it led Arleigh Burke, the father of the modern Navy, to have the foresight to put these two men and their ideas together to create the third and most invulnerable leg of our cold war nuclear triad.

Creativity and imaginative thinking are the great competitive advantages of America and America's military. Today I call upon you to seize and to join this tradition of creativity and innovation. Our national and military leaders owe you a culture that supports innovation and a system that rewards it.

Officers willing to think big thoughts and look at problems with a fresh eye are sometimes wrong. New ideas don't always work. If you pick up this mantle, some of your ideas may fail. But we need to give you this freedom, and we will. It is from your failures that we will learn and acquire the knowledge that will make successful innovation possible. As President, I am committed to fostering a military culture where intelligent risktaking and forward thinking are rewarded, not dreaded. And I'm committed to ensuring that visionary leaders who take risks are recognized and promoted.

The Navy of the future will require innovation and entrepreneurial leadership. It will require safeguarding naval traditions of accountability and responsibility. And as it always has, it will require men and women who live and breathe the values that have made America and her military great.

You know by now that life in the Navy and Marine Corps is not glamorous. You will endure long hours of routine, punctuated—at times without warning—by moments of danger, where the stakes for your crew and your country could not be higher. Annapolis has prepared you well for this life. It has strengthened your bodies and sharpened your minds. Most importantly, it has fortified your character with timeless values, honor, courage, and commitment. Through 4 years, your class has sat through many a lecture about the meaning of these values. You don't need another lecture today. But I do urge you to reflect upon their importance. Reminders of their relevance surround us.

Last month when our EP–3 crew came home from Hainan Island in China, millions of Americans had the opportunity to hear their story on television. From officers and crew, including Lieutenant John Comerford, Annapolis class of 1997, America learned firsthand about the skill and courage it took to land their wounded plane. We also saw a glimpse of the fortitude that allowed the crew to maintain its unity and spirit.

What Americans couldn't know from those television appearances was that these men and women of uncommon valor are, in fact, quite common in today's Navy. What looked extraordinary to America is nothing out of the ordinary among those who wear the uniform. And our Navy and Marine Corps is filled with people, both

officers and enlisted, who have the courage, maturity, and judgment they displayed. I'm sure the admirals from the class of 1951 who joined us today could tell you quite explicitly how the Navy's core values have served them throughout their illustrious careers.

But there are many others from the class of '51 whose stories are lesser known, such as retired Lieutenant Colonel Bill Holmberg. One year and a handful of days after graduation, Second Lieutenant Bill Holmberg found himself on the Korean Peninsula, faced with the daunting task: to infiltrate his platoon deep behind enemy lines in an area swarming with patrol, to rout a tenacious enemy, to seize and hold their position. And that's what he did, and that's what his platoon did. Along the way they came under heavy fire and engaged in fierce hand-to-hand combat. Despite severe wounds, Lieutenant Holmberg refused to be evacuated and continued to deliver orders and direct the offensive until the mission was accomplished. And that's why he wears the Navy Cross. And today, his deeds and the deeds of other heroes from that class echo down through the ages to you.

You can't dictate the values that make a hero. You can't buy them, but you can foster them. And you can give a class like yours a sense of confidence and teamwork that will carry you through the toughest moments in a life of service to a cause greater than all of us.

Today you leave here knowing in your heart a great truth that some in life never discover, that values are important. You understand that life cannot be lived with casual commitments and shallow creeds. You understand that no one can be neutral between right and wrong, tyranny and freedom, cynicism and honor. And you know that the greatest victories are sometimes won on the private battlefields of conscience. Over time, your weapons and methods must change, but your values will not. And because of this, you contribute not just to the military might of our country but to its meaning and conscience and soul. You will not only be the defenders of America but an example to America, and we're deeply grateful.

Finally, as you go about your great work, remember that you're not only officers but ambassadors from the land of freedom. Your work will take you far from our shores. And for many people, you will be, literally, the face of America, the first and, perhaps, only American they will ever meet.

Remember that your very diversity of regional, racial, and religious heritage is, itself, a rebuke to those who hate the ideals you have pledged to defend. Remember that America has always been committed to enlarging the circle of human freedom, not reaching for the crown of empire. And as you wear your Nation's uniform, remember also to wear the humility of true greatness. As your class helps America chart its new course in this new century, these values—honor, courage, commitment, and humility—must be both your anchor and your compass.

You are part of the long blue line of service and sacrifice committed to defending the highest aspirations of the human heart. The best days of our Navy and our Nation are yet to come, and you, by the grace of God, will help us reach the next shore.

Thank you, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:20 a.m. in the Stadium. In his remarks, he referred to Adm. Vern Clark, USN, Chief of Naval Operations, and Vice Adm. John R. Ryan, USN, Superintendent, U.S. Naval Academy; Gen. James L. Jones, USMC, Commandant, Marine Corps; Vice Adm. Edward A. Burkhalter, Jr., USN (Ret.); Vice Adm. Robert F. Dunn, USN (Ret.); Adm. Kinnaird R. McKee, USN (Ret.); Vice Adm. Joseph Metcalf III, USN (Ret.); and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Statement on Congressional Action on Tax Relief Legislation
May 25, 2001

As a result of this landmark tax relief agreement, the American taxpayers will have more money in their pockets to save and invest, and the economy will receive a much-needed shot in the arm. I commend the Members of the House and Senate, Republican and Democrat alike, who made this happen. Tax relief is a centerpiece of our American agenda, and I look forward to signing it into law.

Message on the Observance of National Missing Children's Day
May 25, 2001

I am pleased to send greetings to all those commemorating National Missing Children's Day on May 25. This observance provides an opportunity to honor hard-working and dedicated law enforcement officers, celebrate the recovery of missing children, and draw attention to children who are still missing.

As we remember the children we have lost on National Missing Children's Day, we renew our resolve and dedication to reuniting families with their loved ones. I commend local, state, and Federal law enforcement personnel for the important role they play in missing or exploited children investigations and searches. Across America, partnerships between local law enforcement officers and community groups are helping to protect our children so that they can be nurtured in love and live rich, full lives.

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children deserves special recognition for its work to reunite children with their families. Since 1984, the center has received more than 1.5 million hotline calls, provided assistance in the recovery of more than 55,000 children, and distributed millions of publications regarding missing and exploited children. These efforts make a difference in the lives of countless individuals, and I salute you.

Laura joins me in sending best wishes on this special occasion.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Achieving Benchmarks for a Sustainable Peace Process in Bosnia and Herzegovina
May 25, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by the Levin Amendment to the 1998 Supplemental Appropriations and Rescissions Act (section 7(b) of Public Law 105–174) and section 1203(a) of the Strom Thurmond National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1999 (Public Law 105–261), I transmit herewith a report on progress made toward achieving benchmarks for a sustainable peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In July 2000, the fourth semiannual report was sent to the Congress detailing progress towards achieving the ten benchmarks that were adopted by the Peace

Implementation Council and the North Atlantic Council in order to evaluate implementation of the Dayton Accords. This fifth report, which also includes supplemental reporting as required by section 1203(a) of Public Law 105–261, provides an updated assessment of progress on the benchmarks covering the period July 1, 2000, to February 28, 2001.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
May 25, 2001.

The President's Radio Address
May 26, 2001

Good morning. Most Americans are enjoying a 3-day weekend this Saturday, and I hope you are enjoying yours. I also hope you'll find the time to share in our Nation's observance of Memorial Day, when we pause to reflect on the cost of the free lives we live today.

I will be marking the day with military veterans gathering at the White House, who knew and remember the people who never came back from our Nation's wars. I will then go to Arlington National Cemetery to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns. It will be a high honor, and I will be there on behalf of all the people of the United States. Later that day I will join with veterans in Arizona for a commemoration and national moment of remembrance.

Most of us know war veterans. I had the privilege of being raised by one. Usually, they are reticent about their experiences. It is often difficult for them to think back on those names and faces, on the ones who never lived to be called veterans. But on Memorial Day, we accept our obligation to do just that.

We will remember the heroism, the hardship, the national gain, and personal loss our wars have brought. America has been given so much, but of all our assets, resources, and strengths, none have counted for more than the courage of young soldiers in the face of battle.

When war has come, the great decisions were made here at the White House. But when the orders went out and were received half a world away, victory has always come down to the people flying the planes, manning the ships, carrying the gun and the pack. They're the ones who have cleared the seas, crossed the rivers, charged the hills, and covered the skies. They have defended us. They have died for us. They have never disappointed us. We are in their debt more than a lifetime of Memorial Days could ever repay. With their sacrifice comes a duty that will go on through the generations, to honor them in our thoughts, in our words, and in our lives.

Every Memorial Day we try to grasp the extent of this loss and the meaning of this sacrifice, but it always seems more than words can convey. In the end, all we can do is be thankful; all we can do is remember and always appreciate the price that was paid for our own lives and our own freedom.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 3:40 p.m. on May 24 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 26. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 25 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also

released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks on Congressional Action on Tax Relief Legislation
May 26, 2001

Well, thank you all very much for joining me here at the people's house on this historic occasion. I asked all of you to join me here to be able to publicly thank the Members of the House and the Senate for working so diligently to give Americans another important reason to celebrate this holiday weekend.

I first want to thank House Speaker Dennis Hastert and Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott for their strong and effective leadership, leadership that was instrumental in delivering significant tax relief for the American people. I thank the incoming majority leader of the Senate, Tom Daschle, for working with us to schedule today's vote promptly. I very much appreciate Senator Daschle's willingness to allow the will of the majority of the Senate to prevail, even though he, himself, did not agree.

I thank all the members of the conference committee, especially Chairman Chuck Grassley and Chairman Bill Thomas, Senator Max Baucus and Senator John Breaux, who worked tirelessly to make tax relief a reality. I also want to especially thank Don Nickles, Phil Gramm, Olympia Snowe, and House Majority Leader Dick Armey and all who helped make tax relief possible. And while I'm thanking people, I want to thank all those who voted aye, and so do the taxpayers of America.

Today, for the first time since the landmark tax relief championed 20 years ago by President Ronald Reagan, and 40 years ago by President John F. Kennedy, an American President has the wonderful honor of letting the American people know significant tax relief is on the way.

What is especially significant about the tax relief passed by the United States House and Senate today is that it cuts income taxes for everyone who pays them. Nothing could be more profound, and nothing could be more fair. No more wondering whether you're targeted in or whether you meet all the fine print requirements to qualify for one special tax break or another. No, this tax relief is straightforward and fair. If you pay income taxes, you get relief.

And for this year's first installment of the tax cut, the check will literally be in the mail. Late this summer and into the fall, every single American who pays income taxes will receive a check. Single taxpayers will receive a check of $300. Single parents who are heads of household will receive a check of $500. And married couples will receive a check of $600.

That immediate tax relief will provide an important boost at an important time for our economy. And what is more is you can feel comfortable using it because more tax relief is on the way. The checks are the first installment of lasting, long-term reductions in tax rates. As a result, when this tax relief plan is fully implemented, a typical family of four will see their taxes cut by about half.

The check you will receive in the mail represents your benefit from the newest lowest rate, which drops from 15 percent to 10 percent. Starting in July and continuing next January, the Federal Government will begin reducing the amount it withholds from paychecks to reflect the first phase of new and lower tax rates.

Ultimately, tax rates will be reduced from the current 28 to 25, from 31 down to 28, from 36 to 33, and from 39.6 to 35 percent. Over the next 10 years, the child credit will double from last year's $500 per child to $600 per child this year to $1,000 by the year 2010. The marriage penalty will be dramatically reduced, and the unfair death tax will be completely abolished by the year 2010.

This tax relief helps all taxpayers. It especially helps those at the low end of the economic ladder. It helps American workers by letting them keep more money. And it helps small businesses, so that family-owned restaurants and startup software companies can hire more workers and provide more jobs for Americans. The tax relief package honors marriage and family by reducing the unfair marriage penalty and doubling the credit for children. It does away with one of the most unfair aspects of the Tax Code, a death tax that taxes earnings when you make them, the interest when you save them, and one more time when you die.

As many of you know, throughout my campaign I met tax families all across the country, diverse people from all walks of life who represented the hopes and dreams of American families. Joining us today is one of those families, the Petersons, Paul and Deborah and Juliette and Sarah Kate. They work hard. Paul works during the day at Ukrop's Supermarket in downtown Richmond, Virginia. At night he's working on an MBA at Avery College. Deborah works at home caring for their daughters. The Peterson family was here last February when the prospects for tax relief were not exactly what they were—like they are today.

Well, Paul and Deborah, I'm delighted to let you know that your family will receive $800 in tax relief this year—600 from the check and another 200 from the immediate increase in the child credit.

I have even more good news for the Petersons and folks like them all across America. When you were here in February, we calculated that your ultimate tax savings would be $1,100 a year. Well, when all aspects of the plan are phased in, you will receive not $1,100 a year but $1,700 a year. That is 1,700 more dollars for this good family to spend on their children and on their dreams. I'm confident about one thing: These good folks can spend the $1,700 better than the Federal Government can.

Tax relief was the right thing to do and it is the responsible thing to do for the American people and for our economy.

I once again thank and applaud the Members of Congress, both Republicans and Democrats, who joined together to get results on behalf of the American people. The tax relief package that was voted on today was agreed on last night, after this week's change in the balance of power in the United States Senate. And it can be a model for the work that is ahead. Tax relief was based on important principles, principles that are compassionate and conservative and principles that were preserved during the legislative process of give-and-take.

We listened to the voices of those in my party and in the Democratic Party who wanted additional help for those at the lowest end of the economic ladder. We listened, and as a result, this plan has even more help for lower income Americans. The earned-income credit is expanded for low-income married couples, and the child credit is refundable for parents, providing the most help for those who earn between $10,000 and $25,000 a year.

We acted on principle. We worked together to build consensus and to get results. This is significant, and this is only the beginning. The Peterson family and families like them all across America need more than just a tax cut. The Petersons want us to work together to improve public education, strengthen their retirement security, modernize Medicare, and strengthen and modernize our national defenses.

Again, thanks to the Members of Congress. I hope you enjoy your Memorial Day recess. And then, let's work together to complete the great progress we are making on legislation to improve America's public schools.

Again, I want to thank you all for coming. This is an historic day. It explains the art of the possible. It shows what can happen when good people come together with the intention of doing what's right for the American people. And we have done right by the American people today.

God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:08 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Remarks at a Memorial Day Breakfast
May 28, 2001

Thank you. Well, Tony, thank you very much. I appreciate so very much the fine work you are doing on behalf of the veterans for America. I knew that I made a pretty good selection when I picked Tony. I didn't realize that so many would agree with me so quickly, and I thank you very much for taking on such a tough assignment.

I am also honored that the Secretary of Defense is here. Mr. Secretary, thank you, and thanks for bringing your great wife, as well. I'm pleased to know that Mel Martinez and his wife are here, another Cabinet Secretary, as well as Ann Veneman and Tommy Thompson, head of Health and Human Services. Thank you all for being here today. Jeni, thank you for your kind prayer.

Senator Dole, it's great to see you, sir. I'm really pleased you brought your better half. [*Laughter*] Elizabeth is one of our all-time favorites. I know you've worked hard for this moment, and I want to thank you for being here. I see Freddie Smith, as well, who—you did a fine job of twisting his arm to take over the head of the World War II Memorial Fund. And thanks, Fred, so much for your hard work.

I'm glad Members of the Congress who are here—I thought most of you were trying to escape town, but some of you stayed behind to help celebrate this occasion. Senator Hutchinson from the great State of Arkansas is here. Thank you very much, Tim, for being here. Senator Bob Smith, thank you, sir, for coming. Senator Ted Stevens, I appreciate so very much, you being here. And of course, the chairman, John Warner, thanks for coming. Members of the House Cass Ballenger and Ralph Regula, Ike Skelton, and Chris Smith are here, as well. Thank you all for coming.

I've got to say something about an ex-Congressman. I just saw Sonny Montgomery sitting here, and Sonny, you may not be in the House but a lot of people wish you still were, and thanks so much for being here.

I want to thank the members of the Joint Chiefs who are here. I also want to thank all the World War II vets who are here. And if you wouldn't mind standing, I wish you would, please. [*Applause*]

William Schmidt, an ex-POW, and Joseph Alexander, a Defender of Bataan & Corregidor, are here. You just stood, but I want to thank you two gentlemen for coming, as well.

I want to welcome everybody to the White House. Laura and I are so honored you are here this morning. Later today I will lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns, one of the many acts of remembrance that will mark this day. Many of

you will be there. Thank you for coming, not only here but there, as well.

Each of you is not only a veteran in this room, but each of you is a servant to other veterans, and for that our Nation is grateful. America's veterans have earned not only honors but specific benefits, and those only become more necessary with the years.

My administration will do all it can to assist our veterans and to correct oversights of the past. My budget provides a significant increase for health care at the Department of Veterans Affairs, where Senator Principi is very much in charge. We are making considerable progress on implementing the Veterans Millennium Health Care Act. And the Secretary—did I say Senator Principi? [*Laughter*] Always worried about that balance of power. [*Laughter*] Secretary Principi has begun a top-to-bottom review of VA claims processing in order to identify weaknesses and areas of improvement.

These are good first steps, but they are only first steps. We must also improve the way the VA and the Department of Defense work together to provide care to those who have served in uniform. I am today announcing the creation of a Presidential task force to recommend major reforms in the delivery of health care to veterans and military retirees.

I have asked two distinguished Americans to lead it. Dr. Gail Wilensky is a prominent expert on health policy and a faithful friend to veterans. She will work with Gerry Solomon, who is a long-time advocate for veterans and a former Congressman. One might be tempted to call him an ex-marine, but we all know there is no such thing as an ex-marine. [*Laughter*] I'm honored that both have agreed to serve. I am honored they are both here. Please stand. [*Applause*] Thank you for coming.

America really has been given so much. Yet, of all our assets, resources, and strengths, none have counted more than the courage of our young soldiers in the face of battle. They have cleared the seas, crossed the rivers, charged the hills, and covered the skies, and they have never let America down.

I know that those who have seen war are rarely eager to look back on it, and the hardest memories of all concern those who serve their country and never live to be called veterans. Yet, memory is our responsibility. We are in their debt more than a lifetime of Memorial Days could repay. Their sacrifices left us with a duty that goes on through the generations, to honor them in our thoughts and our words and in our lives.

We have been given that opportunity this morning. On your way to Arlington National Cemetery you will pass The Mall, where our Nation raised up memorials to Washington, Lincoln, and those lost in Vietnam. That same Mall will soon be the site of the World War II Memorial.

The generation of World War II defeated history's greatest tyranny, leaving graves and freedom from Europe to Asia. Our Nation must always remember their heroism and humility and terrible suffering. And that memory must be and will be preserved on the Washington Mall.

The World War II Memorial has been in the works for a long time. The Congress of the United States has acted to remove the obstacles and begin the project. What is required now is a signature, and I am glad to give it. In the 60th year after Pearl Harbor, it is my huge honor to set my name on this bill, ordering construction of a monument that will stand for the ages. Not only will I sign the bill, I will make sure the monument gets built.

Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:40 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony J. Principi, who introduced the President; Kitty Rumsfeld, wife of Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld;

Joyce Martinez, wife of Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Mel R. Martinez; Jeni Cook, Director of Chaplain Services, Department of Veterans Affairs; former Senator Bob Dole, national chairman, and Frederick W. Smith, cochairman, World War II Memorial Campaign; and Elizabeth Dole, former Secretary of Transportation. Following his remarks, the President signed H.R. 1696, to expedite the construction of the World War II Memorial, which was assigned Public Law No. 107–11. The Memorial Day proclamation of May 25 and the Executive order of May 28 on the President's Task Force To Improve Health Care Delivery for Our Nation's Veterans are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on Signing Legislation To Expedite the Construction of the World War II Memorial
May 28, 2001

Today I have signed into law H.R. 1696, a bill to expedite the construction of the World War II memorial in the District of Columbia. It is indeed fitting that this measure becomes law on Memorial Day.

This legislation will allow the Nation to express the appreciation due the World War II generation for their selfless sacrifices that preserved the freedoms we all enjoy. I commend the Congress for a truly bipartisan effort to expedite construction of the memorial.

Now that debate over the site and basic design is concluded, the time has come for all concerned with the creation of the memorial to act with the same determination and sense of common purpose so wonderfully displayed by those we honor. We must get the job done, so that those who served are able to see the Nation's permanent expression of remembrance and thanks.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
May 28, 2001.

NOTE: H.R. 1696, approved May 28, was assigned Public Law No. 107–11.

Remarks at a Memorial Day Ceremony in Arlington, Virginia
May 28, 2001

Mr. Secretary, thank you very much for those kind remarks. Secretary Principi, General Shelton, and members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Jackson, members of the Cabinet, Members of the United States Congress, honored guests. We have a lot of generations represented here today. But I would like for what's now called the "Greatest Generation" to please stand with those who served in World War II, their widows, World War II orphans. Please rise. [*Applause*]

My fellow Americans, a few moments ago, for the first time as President, I paid tribute at this tomb where American soldiers were laid to rest. Their names are known only to God, but there is much we do know about them and about all the others we remember today. We know that they all loved their lives as we love ours. We

know they had a place in the world, families waiting for them, and friends they expected to see again. We know that they thought of a future, just as we do, with plans and hopes for a long and full life. And we know that they left those hopes behind when they went to war and parted with them forever when they died.

Every Memorial Day we try to grasp the extent of this loss and the meaning of this sacrifice. And it always seems more than words can convey. All we can do is remember and always appreciate the price that was paid for our own lives and for our own freedom.

Today, in thousands of towns across this great land, Americans are gathered to pay their own tributes. At 3 o'clock this afternoon Americans will pause for a moment of remembrance. They will meet at monuments or in public squares or, like us, in places where those we honor were laid to rest.

More than any words we say, the truth is told in the things we see, in markers, in dates, in names around us. Some of the names here at Arlington are written large in our history: President John F. Kennedy and his brother Robert; General George C. Marshall; Second Lieutenant Audie Murphy of Kingston, Texas; General Chappy James; Lieutenant Colonel Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., of the Union Army; Captain Robert Todd Lincoln; Generals Bradley and Pershing; Admirals Leahy and Rickover; and three of the men who planted the flag at Iwo Jima. These men were known for their wartime service and also for the lives they lived afterward.

For many, however, the afterward never came. Within these 200 acres are the remains of men and women who died young, some very young. Walking along these paths, a visitor to this national cemetery might view these markers as one great national loss, and that is certainly the case. But we must remember, for many who come here, there is one marker that will always stand out among all the others. In their eyes, it lies alone.

For one woman, Memorial Day brings thoughts of the father she never knew. She recalled as, a young child, learning to pray the words "Our Father, who art in heaven," thinking she was talking to her own father.

For others, there is the memory of the last kiss as the train pulled away, a last wink and parting wisecrack from a big brother, a brave smile from a son who seemed like a boy. And then there was the telegram that came.

To those who have known that loss and felt that absence, Memorial Day gives formal expression to a very personal experience. Their losses can be marked but not measured. We can never measure the full value of what was gained in their sacrifice. We live it every day in the comforts of peace and the gifts of freedom. These have all been purchased for us.

From the very beginning, our country has faced many tests of courage. Our answer to such tests can be found here on these hills and in America's cemeteries, from the islands of the Pacific to the north coast of France.

And on Memorial Day, we must remember a special group of veterans, Americans still missing and unaccounted for from Vietnam, Korea, the cold war, and World War II. We honor them today. They deserve and will have our best efforts to achieve the fullest possible accounting and, alive or dead, to return them home to America.

It is not in our nature to seek out wars and conflicts. But whenever they have come, when adversaries have left us no alternative, American men and women have stood ready to take the risks and to pay the ultimate price. People of the same caliber and the same character today fill the ranks of the Armed Forces of the United States. Any foe who might ever challenge our national resolve would be repeating the grave errors of defeated enemies. Because this Nation loves peace, we do not take it for granted. Because we love freedom,

we are always prepared to bear even its greatest costs.

Arriving here today, all of us passed the strong, straight figures of men and women who serve our country today. To see their youth and discipline and clarity of purpose is humbling to a Commander in Chief. They are the new generation of America's defenders. They follow an unbroken line of good and brave and unfaltering people who have never let this country down.

Today we honor those who fell from the line, who left us, never knowing how much they would be missed. We pray for them with an affection that grows deeper with the years. And we remember them, all of them, with the love of a grateful Nation.

God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:34 a.m. in the Amphitheater at Arlington National Cemetery. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. James T. Jackson, USA, Commanding General, Military District of Washington. The Memorial Day proclamation of May 25 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at a Memorial Day Commemoration in Mesa, Arizona
May 28, 2001

Thank you all very much. Secretary Principi, thank you for agreeing to serve our Nation. Thank you for your vision and hard work to make sure that those who have worn the uniform receive the benefits that they are owed. Principi is a good man who is going to do a fine job on behalf of the American people.

I'm honored to be here with my friend the Governor of the State of Arizona, Jane Dee Hull; Senator Jon Kyl from the great State of Arizona; Congressman Bob Stump, the chairman of the Military Affairs Committee; J.D. Hayworth; and the Congressman from this district, Jeff Flake.

It's an honor to be here with the commanders of Arizona's military bases. I'm pleased to be here with the distinguished guests on the stage. There's one special American here today, a man named Tom Lockhart, who was a captain in the United States Air Force, who had the dubious distinction of trying to teach me how to fly a T–38 aircraft at Moody Air Force Base, Georgia. And I'm so honored my friend, Silver Star winner Tom Lockhart, is with us today as well.

Before I begin, I do want to ask us to join in a moment of silence for a veteran who passed away today, the Congressman from the State of Massachusetts, Congressman Joe Moakley. Please join me in a moment of silence.

[*A moment of silence was observed.*]

Thank you very much. Joe loved America, and he will be sorely missed.

Today's the day we say thanks to many heroes. There's a true hero who is a Senator from the State of Arizona. He is overseas today, but I know you all join me in thanking John McCain for his service, not only to Arizona but to the United States of America. And no President can pass through Arizona without remembering the great Arizona statesman who left us 3 years ago, Senator and Major General Barry Goldwater.

I want to thank you all for coming out. I am so pleased that so many of your citizens lined the streets and came into this hangar on this kind of warm Arizona day. [*Laughter*]

I began this day with a group of veterans at the White House by signing into law

a bill to expedite construction of a national World War II Memorial on The Mall in Washington, DC. I had the honor of bringing one of the two pens I used to sign the bill with me today and present it to the law's primary sponsor in the House of Representatives, Congressman Bob Stump.

Throughout America, we will find monuments to those who served in that war. The generation of World War II defeated one of history's greatest tyrannies, leaving graves and freedom from Europe to Asia. In Phoenix, near your State capital, you keep the anchor of the U.S.S. *Arizona*, honoring the men who died on that ship almost 60 years ago. It is time to build a lasting national memorial to World War II in our Nation's Capital, and the work begins soon.

I would like all those who served our Nation in World War II, World War II widows, and World War II orphans to raise their hands so we can thank you for your service. [*Applause*] Now you can put them down.

Many veterans of other wars are with us today, Korea, Vietnam, the cold war, and other conflicts. We're honored by your presence. And we're honored by the president of the Buffalo Soldiers standing with us today, as well. And we're especially honored by the presence of several men who wear the Nation's highest military decoration, the Medal of Honor. Thank you all for being here.

Arizona is also home to some veterans of the Navajo Code Talkers program. In the Pacific theater, these men made a brilliant and legendary contribution to victory in the Second World War. Countless American lives were spared because our military could communicate in the unbreakable code of the Navajo language. In a time of great need, our country was served bravely and served well by the Navajo.

There are many thousands of veterans in this State. And often veterans are not eager to look back at their experiences. Hardest of all is to recall the ones who never lived to be called veterans. But memory is our duty, and on this day, it is our privilege.

At 3 p.m., in every town, city, village, and hamlet in America, Americans of all walks of life are pausing for a moment of silence. It is 3 p.m. in this great State of Arizona. Please join me in a moment of silence for those who gave their lives to our great Nation.

[*A moment of silence was observed.*]

God bless.

The heroes we remember never really set out to be heroes. Each loved his life as much as we love ours. Each had a place in the world, a family waiting, and friends to see again. They thought of the future, just as we do, with plans and hopes for a long life. But they left it all behind when they went to war and parted with it forever when they died. Every Memorial Day we gather at places like this to grasp the extent of their loss and the meaning of the sacrifice. It always seems more than words can cover. In the end, all we can do is be thankful; all we can do is remember, and always appreciate the price that was paid for our own lives and our own freedom.

Today, in thousands of towns, Americans have gathered to pay their own tributes to the men and women who died young, some very young. We often think of this as one of great national loss, and that is certainly the case. But for so many, and perhaps many here today, there is one name among all the others, a name that recalls a different time and memories held close and quiet. To those who have known such loss and felt such absence in their life, Memorial Day gives formal expression to a very personal experience. Your losses can be marked but not measured. And we can never measure the value of what was gained in their sacrifice. We live it every day in the comforts of peace and the gifts of freedom. These have all been purchased for us, and we're grateful for the sacrifice.

It's not in our nature to seek out wars and conflicts, but whenever they have come, when adversaries have left us no alternative, American men and women have stood ready to take the risks and pay the ultimate price. People of the same caliber and the same character today fill the ranks of the All-Volunteer Army of the United States of America. Any foe who might ever challenge our national resolve would be repeating the grave error of defeated adversaries. Because this Nation loves peace, we do not take it for granted. And because we love freedom, we are always prepared to bear its greatest costs.

I oftentimes see the military folks who serve our Nation so proud and humbled—to see them in lines of such discipline and training and preparedness. They're the new generation of America's defenders. They follow in an unbroken line of good and brave and unfaltering people who have never let this country down.

Today we honor those who fell from the line, who left us never knowing how much they would be missed. We pray for them with an affection that grows deeper with the years. And we remember them, all of them, with the love of a grateful Nation.

Thank you all for coming, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:52 p.m. at the Champlin Fighter Aircraft Museum. H.R. 1696, approved May 28, was assigned Public Law No. 107–11. The Memorial Day proclamation of May 25 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the Death of Representative John Joseph Moakley
May 28, 2001

Laura and I extend our deepest sympathies to the Moakley family. Joe was a fine man. As a veteran and later a Congressman, he served his country and the people of Massachusetts with distinction and honor. He was respected by his colleagues on both sides of the aisle and was known for his candor, wit, and humility. We will miss him.

Statement on the Global Forum on Fighting Corruption and Safeguarding Integrity II
May 28, 2001

The corruption of governmental institutions threatens the common aspirations of all honest members of the international community. It threatens our common interests in promoting political and economic stability, upholding core democratic values, ending the reign of dictators, and creating a level playing field for lawful business activities.

A few short years ago, talking openly about corruption was considered taboo. Today, however, officials from many countries are meeting and working together to demand greater transparency and accountability in public affairs. From Asia to Europe to Africa to the Americas, these efforts are exposing corrupt practices to the sunshine of public scrutiny, where, ultimately, they cannot survive.

This week the second Global Forum on Fighting Corruption and Safeguarding Integrity will help to keep the promotion of integrity and transparency high on the international agenda. I want to underscore the United States' support for the Global Forum's work, applaud the large number of participating states, and especially, thank the Government of The Netherlands for hosting this event.

Increasing accountability and transparency in governance around the world is an important foreign policy objective for my administration. The United States is committed to bringing renewed energy to the global anticorruption agenda and to increasing the effectiveness of the American policies and programs that address this important issue.

I salute the work of delegates to the second Global Forum, and I strongly support your important objectives.

Remarks at Camp Pendleton, California
May 29, 2001

The President. Thank you all very much. General Hagee, thank you very much. Thank you for your warm welcome here at the white house——

[*At this point, there was an interruption in the audience.*]

The President. Thank you. Behave yourself. [*Laughter*]

General Hanlon, thank you very much. And General Conway, I appreciate so very much you greeting me. It's an honor to be here with Colonel Christian, Sergeant Major Royce Coffee, Sergeant Major M.G. Markiewicz, and the fine troops of Camp Pendleton.

I appreciate so very much Members of the United States Congress who are here, stalwarts when it comes to sound defense spending, strong advocates for tax relief, education reform: Congressmen Mary Bono, Duke Cunningham, Duncan Hunter, Darrell Issa, and Dana Rohrabacher. Thank you so much for coming here.

It is a real great privilege for me to be here today. I've had a heck of a week, particularly since I've been able to spend a lot of time around America's military forces. Last Wednesday I attended a reenlistment ceremony at the White House, where we swore in a group of sailors and marine airmen to a new term. Two days later I had the honor of giving the commencement address at Annapolis at the Naval Academy. And yesterday I had the high privilege of laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington Cemetery. I spent a lot of quality time with a lot of quality people, the people who wear the uniform in the United States military, the men and women who serve and sacrifice so Americans can sleep in peace, knowing that freedom is in good hands.

I've been looking forward to this trip, and looking forward to being able to extend a proper Marine Corps greeting: Ooh-rah!

Audience members. Ooh-rah! [*Laughter*]

The President. There's no higher honor than to serve as Commander in Chief. It's also a high honor to be able to come to Camp Pendleton, a place that helps turn new recruits into leathernecks, a place that serves as home to the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force and to one of America's oldest and most decorated units, the 1st Marine Division.

Camp Pendleton serves as the launching pad for what marines do best, to deploy rapidly so you can be the first on the scene wherever freedom and America's interests

are threatened. As the stone markers in our midst remind us, marines have sailed from Camp Pendleton to fight at Guadalcanal, at Okinawa and Inchon. Marines from Camp Pendleton fought in the jungles and rice paddies of Vietnam. Marines from Camp Pendleton helped liberate Kuwait. Today, you carry forward this proud tradition, ready to answer when America calls.

Because you are marines, you are often asked to perform the most difficult and dangerous missions. Because you are marines, you not only accept this challenge, you embrace it, not for glory and not for self but for God, country, corps, and your fellow marines.

I respect your service. I appreciate your sacrifice, and I know what you contribute to our Nation. In a world of fast-changing threats, you give us stability. Because of you, America's secure, and the march of freedom continues.

I know how hard your work is. I know that your frequent deployments are hard on you and hard on your families. Marines pride themselves on traveling light and fighting hard. But here at home, you and your families deserve something better. You deserve our Nation's full support, and with this administration, you will get it.

The first budget I submitted to Congress contains a $1.4 billion military pay raise. That's on top of the pay raises that Congress recently passed. It provides $400 million in new funds to improve military housing and $3.9 billion to improve military health benefits. After all your country receives from you, you must receive better housing, better pay, and better health. You're entitled to a defense budget that meets our current needs and our future obligations. And you're entitled to a Commander in Chief who sets a clear goal, a clear vision for our military. And that goal is to be well equipped and well trained, to be able to fight and win war and, therefore, prevent wars from happening in the first place.

No one can come here without being struck by the physical beauty. Marines are good stewards of our southern California coastline. You're also practicing good stewardship by the way you're using—and not using—the supply of energy in California.

The Federal Government is the single biggest user of electricity in the State of California. On May 3d, I ordered all Federal agencies to take extra steps to conserve energy. And the Department of Defense immediately committed itself to reducing its electricity consumption by 10 percent during peak hours. I'm pleased to report that the military and Federal agencies are exceeding expectations.

And Camp Pendleton deserves special credit, and I am here to give you special credit. I congratulate you for seeking extra conservation savings over the 10 percent. And that's going above and beyond the call of duty, and I salute you. Altogether, we estimate that the Federal conservation efforts will save the State 76 megawatts per hour during peak use periods, when power is most needed. Seventy-six megawatts per hour is enough electricity for 140,000 people during peak demand periods. That's as many people who live in Pasadena, California.

Over the past 30 years, Americans have made steady conservation progress. If we still used energy the way we did in 1972, we'd be using 74 percent more energy today than we actually do. A new car uses about 60 percent as much gasoline as a car made in 1972. A new refrigerator uses about only 30 percent as much electricity as a 1972 refrigerator.

Yet this conservation progress slowed in the 1990s, and more than 40 of the 100-plus recommendations in my administration's energy plan are intended to protect the environment, help hard-hit communities, and revitalize our conservation efforts all across the country.

We have other initiatives as well. Our Nation needs to modernize its networks for moving energy from the powerplant to the

outlet on the wall. Again, you in California know that well. For almost 20 years, it's been clear that what's called Path 15, the stretch of transmission line connecting the power grids of northern and southern California, needed to be expanded and modernized. And now we're taking action to get the job done.

Energy Secretary Spence Abraham is speeding approval of the necessary permits and easements. We're going to unplug the Path 15 bottleneck. We're advancing toward an interstate electric grid to match our interstate highways and interstate phone systems.

Rising energy prices are a challenge for everyone. I believe you will find my tax relief plan will provide some help, a tax relief plan that is worth $100 billion to the consumers all across America, including those who wear the uniform. But for some Americans and some Californians, high energy costs are more than a challenge. They're an emergency, and our Government must respond.

In February my budget—I asked Congress for $300 million in aid for low-income people struggling with rising energy bills. Today I'm announcing I'll ask Congress for an additional $150 million in low income energy assistance, and I hope Congress acts quickly.

Energy debates sometimes throw off some sparks, but this is no time for harsh rhetoric. It's certainly no time for name calling. It's time for leadership. It's time for results. It's time to put politics aside and focus on the best interests of the people.

This is an administration that's focused on results. We're going to work together—the Federal Government, the State government, the military, and all the citizens. Speaking of citizens, you're the best of citizens. You commit your lives to our country. You dedicate yourself to something greater than yourself.

Whatever is asked of you and your fellow marines, you have given, as Abraham Lincoln said, "The last full measure of devotion." As I look in the eyes and shake the firm grips of your fellow marines, it reminds me the Marine Corps is in good hands, and so is our country.

Thank you so very much for your hospitality and *Semper Fi.*

NOTE: The President spoke at 9 a.m. at the 1st Marine Division headquarters building. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Gen. Michael W. Hagee, USMC, commanding general, and Sgt. Maj. Royce G. Coffee, USMC, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force; Maj. Gen. Edward Hanlon, Jr., USMC, commanding general, and Sgt. Maj. Michael G. Markiewicz, USMC, Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Base; Maj. Gen. James T. Conway, USMC, commanding general, 1st Marine Division; and Col. Paul C. Christian, USMC, commanding officer, Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Air Station.

Remarks to the Los Angeles World Affairs Council in Los Angeles, California

May 29, 2001

Mr. Mayor, thank you very much. I think what he's saying is there's some pretty big shoes to follow when he leaves office. [*Laughter*] Mayor, I appreciate your leadership. Thank you for your friendship. Tell Shaq they don't fit. [*Laughter*]

Governor Davis, thank you so much for being here. I'm looking forward to our

meeting today. I'm honored by your presence. Secretary of State Jones, thank you for being here. Members of the congressional delegation David Dreier, Buck McKeon, Ed Royce, and Stephen Horn are here, and I'm honored that you came.

I want to thank Bruce so very much for your invitation and putting together this august crowd of fellow citizens. I want to thank Stephen Bollenbach, as well, all the officers. I especially want to thank you all for coming and giving me a chance to talk about important issues facing our Nation.

Some people say, "What brings you out here?" [*Laughter*] Well, there's a lot of reasons, and one is particularly profound: My cat lives here. [*Laughter*] When Laura and I moved to Washington, we unfortunately had to find another home for our cat, Ernie. We loved him a lot, but we were not sure that he was the sort of cat who could be trusted around the historic furniture in the White House. [*Laughter*] Our good friend Brad Freeman had developed a close relationship with Ernie—[*laughter*]—and he adopted him and brought him out here to L.A. I figured it was time to check up on both of them. [*Laughter*] I'm pleased to report that Ernie is doing fine. He loves Los Angeles. He's dating. [*Laughter*] He has an agent—[*laughter*]—and for some reason, he looks 10 years younger. [*Laughter*]

Laura and I had the wonderful honor of moving into the White House, but Ernie may be a little luckier. He gets to live in California.

I'm glad to be here today to talk about our economy and a prosperity agenda for America. These are uncertain times for our economy at home and for the economies of our friends in different parts of the world, including the Pacific Rim. Yet, I know we have an opportunity to build an enduring prosperity through principled leadership and sound public policy.

So we're reducing taxes to create jobs by speeding up economic growth and encouraging capital formation. We're enacting sweeping reforms to improve our public schools and prepare our people to succeed in a high-tech economy of the future. We will negotiate open trade to find new markets for American products, from movies to electronics to California farm produce. And we will secure our Nation's energy future by generating clean and reliable power on which high-tech economy depends.

There's no better place to talk about this prosperity agenda than right here in California, our largest State and the sixth largest economy in the world. California is our Nation's biggest exporter. It receives more foreign direct investment than any other State in our Union. More than 40 percent of the Nation's venture capital is sourced here, and California is home to more than one-quarter of our computing manufacturing industry.

Our prosperity agenda is designed for the economy of our whole Nation and for the 13 percent of that economy that is located right here in the great State of California.

One important element of our prosperity agenda is now complete, the biggest tax cut in 20 years. A year ago, tax relief was supposed to be a political impossibility. Six months ago, it was supposed to be a political liability. Now, it's reality. That's an achievement that is good for our economy. It's an achievement that's good for California. It's an achievement that's good for America.

For taxpayers, tax relief will mean more money to spend and save. For parents, tax relief will make it easier to raise a child. For farmers and business owners, death tax relief will protect your property for your loved ones. And for small business, tax relief creates jobs and new opportunities.

The vast majority of small businesses pay taxes on the personal, rather than the corporate tax schedule. By cutting the rates many small businesses pay, we're putting American Government on the side of the entrepreneur, on the side of the inventors of Silicon Valley, on the side of the Korean

business people who have revived long blocks of Wilshire Boulevard, on the side of hundreds of thousands of Latino-owned businesses in Los Angeles alone.

Tax relief reverses one of the most ominous economic trends of recent years, a trend toward Government consuming a larger and larger share of the national income. Last year the Federal Government took a larger share of our national income than it did in 1945. We were paying wartime prices for peacetime Government. Once we fund our priorities and meet our Nation's important needs, we should return tax dollars to the people who earned them. And that's exactly what we're doing.

Tax relief is supported by Members of Congress from both political parties, who work together to serve the American people. And here, let me pay special tribute to one of the hardest working of those Members, the chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, the first Californian ever to hold that influential post, my good friend from Bakersfield, Bill Thomas. Thanks to his leadership and the leadership of others, April 15th will be a less taxing experience for Americans.

Another item on the prosperity agenda is education reform. And here, too, the spirit of cooperation and the spirit of getting things done in Washington is producing results for the American people. The House has passed, overwhelmingly—and I hope the Senate will pass soon—the most significant education reform in 35 years. These bipartisan reforms will require testing of all schoolchildren in grades three through eight to make sure that they are learning.

These reforms will direct additional resources to those who need help. They will give new options to parents of children in persistently failing schools. They will reduce Federal bureaucracy and strengthen local control of schools. They will help local schools reach a significant goal by funding early childhood reading programs. We will more likely make sure that no child is left behind in America. Education reform is essential to keep faith with our country's promise of equality of opportunity, and education reform is essential to our economic progress.

We're grateful that the world's most skilled workers want to come to the United States. Our technology advantage rests on the contributions of immigrants from places like India or China, Russia, Iran, and hundreds of others of countries. But while we're importing the world's best, too many Americans are locked out of the economy of a future by schools that don't teach and won't change. Our prosperity agenda will equip every American child with the skills he or she needs to do valuable work and earn a good wage.

Our prosperity agenda also includes the opening of world markets. The United States has been hamstrung at the world's negotiating tables for too long. In the 1980s and early nineties we negotiated one important trade agreement after another: the U.S.-Israel Free Trade Agreement, U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement, NAFTA, and the Uruguay Multilateral Round. These trade-expanding agreements enriched America and strengthened democracy around the world and in our hemisphere.

But in 1994 Presidential trade promotion authority lapsed. Since then, our trade progress has faltered. We have few better friends in the world, for example, than Chile. Yet, American goods are burdened with a higher tariff in Chile than Canadian goods. Canada has negotiated a free trade agreement with Chile; America has not.

The growth of the world economy depends on world trade. The growth of world trade depends on American leadership. And America will lead toward freer trade, toward wider and more lasting prosperity for ourselves and for the world.

We need to advance free trade globally, regionally, and bilaterally. It is time to initiate a new global trade round, just as we have launched negotiations in our own hemisphere with the Free Trade Area of

the Americas. We need congressional action on trade agreements with Jordan and Vietnam. We want to complete our free trade agreements with Chile and Singapore.

To demonstrate American leadership on all these issues, I'm asking the United States Congress to approve U.S. trade promotion authority this year. And because trade creates prosperity and prosperity promotes democracy, I will notify Congress on June 1st that I intend to extend normal trade relation status with China for another year.

Open trade is a force for freedom in China, a force for stability in Asia, and a force for prosperity in the United States. And this is not just my personal view. The institutions and individuals in China who are the least friendly to freedom are often the least friendly to trade. The institutions and individuals most sympathetic to freedom are often the most friendly to trade. They know what I know: Free trade supports and sustains freedom in all its forms.

Free trade has expanded the portion of China's economy that is independent of the State. Free trade has swelled the ranks of independent businessmen. Free trade has introduced new technologies that offer Chinese people access to uncensored information and democratic ideas.

When we open trade, we open minds. We trade with China because trade is good policy for our economy, because trade is good policy for democracy, and because trade is good policy for our national security.

California benefits greatly from trade. More than a million jobs in this State are supported by manufactured exports alone. In addition, California is the Nation's largest agricultural exporter. Long Beach and Los Angeles handle more traffic than any other ports in the country. This State is the headquarters of our entertainment industry, which also draws more and more of its earnings from overseas sales. Altogether, California's exports grew by more than 20 percent in the year just ended. When the world trades in freedom, it buys what California sells.

And our prosperity agenda makes a priority of energy security. We can get everything else right, but if we—if our energy supply is unreliable or unaffordable, our economy cannot thrive. For too long, America has neglected energy. The neglect ends now.

My administration has developed a comprehensive national energy policy, more than 100 recommendations to promote conservation, expand energy production, improve energy transmission, and protect the environment. We put conservation first because we have seen the important difference conservation can make. Our economy has grown by 126 percent since 1973, adjusting for inflation. Our energy use has grown by only 30 percent. To add one dollar to our gross domestic product takes only about a half as much energy as it did 30 years ago.

These are the achievements of conservation. Yet, progress on conservation slowed in the 1990s. Our energy plan will renew and reinvigorate conservation by supporting productive research into energy-saving efficiency and by offering businesses and consumers incentives to switch to new energy sources that consume less fuel and emit fewer pollutants.

Conservation is an important part of the energy equation, as Californians know. California is already an impressive conservation leader, one of the most energy-efficient States in the Union. And I commend and salute your achievement. But even California's admirable conservation effort was not, by itself, enough to keep pace with your growing demand. So our energy plan encourages to produce a diverse supply of energy in an environmentally friendly way, through safe and clean nuclear power; wind, solar, biomass, and other renewables; hydropower; clean coal; and using new technologies to tap oil and natural gas in ways that tread lightly on the Earth. Our energy plan promotes new technologies to

ensure this new supply is produced cleanly and with respect for our environment.

And Mr. Governor, I will honor my commitment to you to uphold the moratorium on new drilling leases off the coast of California.

We must do all our part to conserve energy. On May the 3d I called on all Federal agencies to take extra steps to conserve energy. And the Department of Defense immediately committed itself to reducing its electricity consumption by 10 percent at peak hours.

I visited Camp Pendleton this morning and saw the contribution our military is making. I was impressed. We estimate that Federal conservation efforts will save this State at least 76 megawatts per hour during peak periods. Seventy-six megawatts in a peak hour is enough power to supply the entire city of Pasadena.

And we must bring new supply on-line as quickly as possible. My administration has worked with your good Governor and Californian authorities to speed the approval of new powerplants, expand electricity production, and to increase the flow of natural gas into your State. But for too long, too often, too many have wasted energy, pointing fingers and laying blame. Energy is a problem that requires action—not politics, not excuses, but action. Blame shifting is not action; it's a distraction. My administration will continue to work to help California through the difficult months ahead.

All our efforts are guided by a simple test: Will any action increase supply at fair and reasonable prices? Will it decrease demand in equitable ways? Anything that meets that test will alleviate the shortage, and we will move swiftly to adopt it. Anything that fails that test will make the shortage worse. We will not take any action that makes California's problems worse.

And that's why I oppose price caps. Price caps do nothing to reduce demand, and they do nothing to increase supply. This is not only my administration's position; this was the position of the prior administration. At first blush, for those struggling to pay high energy bills, price caps may sound appealing. But their result will ultimately be more serious shortages and, therefore, even higher prices.

I want to assure Californians that the Federal Government takes very seriously our responsibility to make sure that companies are not illegally gouging consumers. I have publicly called on Federal agencies to investigate all complaints of illegal gouging and, if those complaints are justified, to take strong and appropriate action. I'm pleased that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has done just that. It has rolled back a record amount of overcharges where objective investigation has found abuses.

My administration is committing to doing our part to help California as it confronts its energy problems. We'll protect consumers from abuses. We'll do our part to conserve energy and to speed up the issuing of permits for new energy projects. We're committed to a new approach for a new century. Energy and the environment do not have to be competing priorities. They are shared goals, and both are important to all Americans.

For decades, California has been the place where the future happens first. Your continuing success is essential to the success of our national economy. Our shared success will come from a pro-growth tax policy, schools that teach, an open and vibrant world economy, and an abundant, affordable energy supply.

This is the agenda for every State and for all our people. We must get these fundamentals right. Yet the purpose of a strong foundation is to build something greater. Just as every individual must look for a fulfillment deeper than wealth, our Nation must seek purposes beyond prosperity. This is our history, a heritage of idealism. We want to build more than the wealth of our country; we want to build the character of our children. We want to expand more

than the influence of a Nation; we want to expand the compassion of our Nation.

Our country faces problems that seem immune to affluence: addiction and abuse, fragile families and brittle values. These problems have often been immune to the policies of the past. They call America to a deeper renewal, a renewal of the soul. They challenge our political leadership. We must find creative new ways to promote the compassion of charities and communities to meet the needs of our country. And we must do more to take the side of parents as they struggle to raise responsible, decent, motivated children. These problems also challenge every citizen to be responsible for your families, for your lives, and for loving a neighbor like you'd like to be loved yourself.

We want our wealthy Nation to be a decent, generous, and compassionate Nation. These are the goals that unite our country. These are the goals that inspire my administration. And these are the goals, when achieved, that will continue America's greatness.

It is my honor to be here. God bless California, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:10 p.m. in the Los Angeles Ballroom at The Century Plaza Hotel & Spa. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Richard J. Riordan of Los Angeles; Shaquille O'Neal, center, NBA Los Angeles Lakers; Gov. Gray Davis and Secretary of State Bill Jones of California; and Bruce E. Karatz, chairman, and Stephen F. Bollenbach, vice chairman, Los Angeles World Affairs Council.

Remarks at Sequoia National Park, California
May 30, 2001

Thank you all very much. Gale, thank you very much. You're going to like working for Gale. She's a commonsense person who cares deeply about our National Park System and about our Nation's environment. I picked a fine, fine person to lead this very important agency. And Madam Secretary, thank you for traveling with me today.

Dick, thank you very much for your fine hospitality. It's a fantastic trip up to Moro Rock. I'm a survivor of the march up to Moro—[*laughter*]—led by Debbie Bird, chief ranger. What a fantastic hike it was. It's a spectacular place, and it must be a joyous place to work. And for all of you who work on behalf of the people of the United States and the Park Service, I thank you very much for your service.

I'm so very pleased that three Members of the United States Congress are here, three really fine public servants, Cal Dooley, Gary Condit, and George Radanovich. Thank you all so much for coming.

I, too, want to thank the board members of the Sequoia Fund and the board members of the Sequoia Natural History Association. Thank you for working with these fine public stewards to make sure this park offers this beauty for every citizen who wants to come here.

Any day that you can take in sights like these is a great day. It has been a great day for me. This place leaves each of us with a feeling of incredible humility. That's one reason why it's so important. In our daily lives we're surrounded by things of our own making, buildings and machines and goods we create ourselves. There's much to admire and appreciate in the works of man. But come here and you're reminded of a design that is not our own. Here we find a grandeur beyond our power to equal.

We're standing amongst the largest trees on Earth and some of the very oldest. When the *Mayflower* arrived on the eastern shore of this continent, the great sequoias were already here. When the seal was fixed on the Magna Carta, the great sequoias were already here. They were here when the Roman Empire fell, and they were here when the Roman Empire rose. And had Christ himself stood on this spot, He would have been in the shade of this very tree.

When men and women walk into a setting like this, we must walk with care. Of all the forces on Earth, only man is capable of cutting down a sequoia, and only man is capable of fully appreciating its beauty.

And fortunately, more than a century ago, the Government of the United States stayed the hand of all who would destroy this place and these trees. That decision, by President Benjamin Harrison, reflects an ethic of respect for the natural world that was once shared only by a few but is now a basic commitment of American life.

Our duty is to use the land well and, sometimes, not to use it at all. This is our responsibility as citizens, but more than that, it is our calling as stewards of the Earth. Good stewardship of the environment is not just a personal responsibility; it is a public value. Americans are united in the belief that we must preserve our natural heritage and safeguard the land around us. This belief is affirmed in our laws.

With more than 80 million acres under protection, our National Park System has set the standard for the world in preserving natural lands. We've given a reprieve to our national symbol, the bald eagle. Through cooperative efforts with wildlife biologists and private landowners, the condors are back in the wilds of California. Americans have come to understand that other creatures need the room to roam and places to live.

Other laws express this same commitment. Our lakes and rivers are much cleaner than they were 30 years ago. Firm limits on toxic emissions have greatly improved the quality of the air we breathe. And I'm proud that it was my dad's signature on the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 that helped reduce acid rain and urban air pollutions.

Over the last three decades, nearly 3,000 hazardous waste facilities have been closed. We've made much progress in ridding our towns and cities of brownfields, and even more progress will be made over the next several years. And the Environmental Protection Agency has begun or completed cleanups in more than 90 percent of the sites targeted under Superfund.

This marks tremendous progress in protecting our Nation's environment. It's not the doing of a single party or the branch of Government or a State or a community or a group; it's been the work of Presidents and Congresses and Governors, as well as landowners, environmentalists, and local leaders. All have responded to the appeal of conscience and the clear wishes of the American people.

Today I continue to speak about my conservation policies and the principles that will guide them. These policies reflect the vital role we each play as stewards of our lands and the Federal Government's part as steward of nearly one-third of the American landmass. And they reflect that, while we've made great progress, much more must be done to protect the environment.

In spite of the successes of the past 30 years, at times we've seen needless conflict and policies that have done more harm than good. Today, we must seek the best ways to achieve the common goal of leaving to posterity a nation of fresh air, clean water, and natural beauty. These policies arise from the conviction that a healthy environment is a national concern and requires an active National Government. At the same time, States and localities have their own responsibilities for the environment. They have their own authority, too. And usually they have a better grasp of the problem and what is needed to solve

it. Washington has sometimes relied too much on threat and mandate from afar, when it should be encouraging innovation and high standards from the people closest to the land.

My administration will adopt a new spirit of respect and cooperation, because in the end, that is the better way to protect the environment we all share—a new environmentalism for the 21st century. Citizens and private groups play a crucial role. Just as we share an ethic of stewardship, we must share in the work of stewardship. Our challenge is to work in partnership. We must protect the claims of nature while also protecting the legal rights of property owners. We will succeed, not by antagonizing one another but by inviting all to play a part in the solutions we seek.

For the Federal Government, good stewardship begins right here, in this and in the hundreds of other park areas across America. Washington has a very clear and direct responsibility for these lands. Yet many parks have gone years without receiving the kind of care and upkeep the American people expect. More than 287 million people now visit our national parks each year. At the same time, however, many of our parks have gone neglected. So, today I'm announcing the National Parks Legacy Project. My administration will make a major investment in our national parks to preserve the legacy of protection for future generations. We will spend $5 billion over 5 years to clean up the backlog in maintenance and make our parks more inviting and accessible to all citizens.

We're the first administration to request full funding for our country's Land and Water Conservation Fund, to provide needed dollars to help local folks meet conservation concerns.

This park is a model to follow. The Park Service is nearing completion of a project to remove structures once thought necessary but which now threaten to damage the roots of the sequoias. In my budget, I propose spending $1.5 billion to help complete this project. Working with the local community and the Sequoia Natural History Association, we will offer the young and old alike an opportunity to learn more about the wonders of nature.

In all our parks, we want visitors to feel welcome and to enjoy the experiences that nature and history have to offer. Future renovations will make this more possible by adding, for example, many more miles of carefully drawn hiking paths. Here again, Sequoia is a model, allowing for more visitors without destroying the very things that draw people here, the scenery, the quiet, the animals left unharmed in their natural habitat. And we will leave them that way.

Our parklands are home to thousands of species of flora and fauna. And as stewards of these lands, the Federal Government has the responsibility to protect and nurture them in their habitats and enhance the science that helps to protect biodiversity. For the next 5 years, we'll protect nearly 4,000 miles of river and restore nearly 9,000 acres of parklands to their natural conditions. We have more than doubled the budget to help us better study our parks' natural resources, learn better ways to protect and restore them, and teach visitors about how they can help. My administration will also pass new rules to help remove haze in many of America's national parks.

Our national parks are for all to visit and all Americans to enjoy. And we will continue our work to make these national treasures accessible to those with disabilities and to welcome people of all backgrounds.

And to make sure that we're achieving our goals in these areas, I'm asking our park rangers to prepare stewardship plans for each park in America. I'll also direct Secretary Norton to prepare an annual report describing the condition of our parks, with recommendations of ways to improve them.

Some fear that places like this are scenes from a passing world. They're not. They will be here as long as we're willing to

show careful regard for the environment. This is a great responsibility. I strongly believe our country is equal to it.

America itself is just 225 years old, a momentous era and yet so short a time in the life of the world. We cannot see into the centuries ahead, but we can be sure, in a place like this, that we're in the presence of enduring things. And it will be to our lasting credit if these works of God are still standing 1,000 years from now.

Thank you for having me.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:40 a.m. at the Giant Forest Museum. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of the Interior Gale A. Norton and Richard H. Martin, Superintendent, Kings Canyon and Sequoia National Parks.

Remarks Honoring the 2000 NCAA Women's Volleyball Champion University of Nebraska Cornhuskers

May 31, 2001

The President. Welcome. Thank you. Be seated.

It's my honor to welcome some true champs to the Rose Garden, and thank you all for coming. To the team, I'm honored you're here. To the family and friends who are here, thank you so much for accompanying the champions. Coach Cook, thank you for being here, and I want to thank the athletic director as well.

I've spent some time watching Big 12 sports. [*Laughter*] Ever since the Big 12 combined, some of my Texas teams haven't fared too well—[*laughter*]—including the Texas volleyball teams. So I want to congratulate you all for being here. When I ran for office, I told the voters I would surround myself with excellence. I did so again today. [*Laughter*]

This has been an unbelievably strong team, made up of some unique individuals, starting with the Player of the Year, Greichaly Cepero. It is a huge honor to be the Player of the Year. And Greichaly, congratulations to you and Amber Holmquist and Laura Pilakowski.

But it's more than just to be great players; it's important to be good people, too. And that's the thing that I have been most impressed with by this club. Not only are the girls up here champs on the court, but they've been champs in the classroom. And it's important for young men and women who look at the Nebraska champs to understand that quality of life is more than just blocking shots. Good quality of life means excelling in the classroom and also in the neighborhoods across America.

One of the reasons I'm so thankful to be able to welcome sports champions to the Rose Garden is that it gives me a chance to remind people about what a responsible society should be about, and it should be about loving a neighbor like you'd like to be loved yourself or setting good, strong examples when you have an opportunity to do so.

And finally, I can't go without saying how impressed I am by the Nebraska fan base—[*laughter*]—whether it be for women's volleyball or maybe football. [*Laughter*] But there's nothing like the Big Red. So again, I want to congratulate you all for coming.

The other thing I want to say about the coach is that obviously it requires—a good team requires somebody who knows how to build a team. And that's why your coach is Coach of the Year and deservedly so.

So on behalf of a well-oiled unit of people who came together to serve something greater than themselves, congratulations.

[*At this point, player Jill McWilliams made brief remarks and, with teammates Kim Behrends and Angie Oxley, presented the President with a jersey and a signed volleyball.*]

The President. So here's what we're going to do. Why don't you all come—and if you'd complete the trip, why don't you come into the Oval Office so I can show you one of the great shrines of America.

Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:55 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to John Cook, women's volleyball coach, and Bill Byrne, director of athletics, University of Nebraska.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on Sanctions Pursuant to the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Act
May 31, 2001

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I hereby report pursuant to section 804(b) of the Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Act, 21 U.S.C. 1901–1908, 8 U.S.C. 1182 (the "Kingpin Act"), that the following 12 foreign persons are appropriate for sanctions pursuant to the Kingpin Act, and that I am imposing sanctions upon them pursuant to that Act:

Osiel Cardenas Guillen
Miguel Caro Quintero
Joaquin Guzman Loera
Ismael Higuera Guerrero
Oscar Malherbe de Leon
Alcides Ramon Magana
Jose Alvarez Tostado
Sher Afghan
Nasir Ali Khan
Chang Ping Yun
Jamil Hamieh
Joseph Gilboa

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Henry J. Hyde, chairman, House Committee on International Relations; F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr., chairman, House Committee on the Judiciary; Porter J. Goss, chairman, House Committee on Intelligence; Bob Stump, chairman, House Committee on Armed Services; William M. Thomas, chairman, House Committee on Ways and Means; Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; John W. Warner, chairman, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Orrin G. Hatch, chairman, Senate Committee on the Judiciary; Richard C. Shelby, chairman, Senate Committee on Intelligence; and Chuck E. Grassley, chairman, Senate Committee on Finance. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 1.

Remarks to National Race for the Cure Participants
June 1, 2001

The President. Thank you, First Lady. [*Laughter*] Thank you all for coming. It's kind of a raucous crowd here in the White House—[*laughter*]—but for a reason: There's a lot of joy here.

I'm so honored to be here with Nancy and the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Tommy Thompson. I want to thank Congressman Ken Bentsen, who is here, I believe. And I certainly want to thank Jo Dee Messina for lending your talents.

It's my honor to welcome you to the White House. Your great movement represents hope for cancer victims and hope for cancer's cures. And I can't tell you how honored we are to have you here. Many of you play key roles in the fight against breast cancer, beginning with our dear friend Ambassador-designee Nancy Brinker, the founder of the Komen Foundation, which during the last 20 years has become the largest private funder of breast cancer research and community outreach in the Nation. You've raised over $400 million to support breast cancer research, education, screening, and treatment.

I want to thank those of you who are participating in tomorrow's Race for the Cure. I wish I was running. [*Laughter*]

Audience member. Come on out! [*Laughter*]

The President. Well, talk to the Secret Service. [*Laughter*] Plus I'm a little older than the last time I ran. [*Laughter*]

Less than 20 years ago, the first Komen Race for the Cure was held in Dallas, Texas. Eight hundred people participated in that race, and we raised $130,000. This year there will be 115 races across the country and around the world, involving 1.3 million participants. Last year alone, the National Race for the Cure in Washington, DC, raised more than $3 million.

The great thing about this race is you're not running for time, running for ribbons; you're running to save lives. And America is grateful.

Laura and I want to recognize those of you in the audience who have had breast cancer. We appreciate your courage. You've endured—and many of you are still undergoing—one of life's toughest and most terrifying struggles. In your suffering you have demonstrated dignity and determination, grit and grace, courage and character. And through your fight against cancer you have become witnesses to the power of hope.

Lisa Rodriguez has endured that struggle and cherishes that hope. Lisa is here with us today. I had the honor of meeting her this morning. She says her cancer diagnosis taught her how important time was and how important finding a cure is. Since then, she's been focused on beating cancer and working to make sure others have the support and information they need to fight and to win.

Like Lisa, most of you did not fight your battle alone. You've had the support of your families. They've suffered with you; they have remained faithful in their love for you; and we want to thank them as well.

Breast cancer, as you know, is the second most common type of cancer amongst women in the United States. Every 3 minutes brings a new case. Every 13 minutes brings another death from breast cancer. Yet, we also live in a profoundly hopeful time. Fewer women are dying of breast cancer each year. Awareness about breast cancer has never been greater. We've made progress in early detection and screening. We're seeing better and more effective treatment. New drugs offer exciting possibilities, and we are gathering a wealth of information about how cancer works at its most basic molecular level.

We have just received the 2001 cancer statistics from the Public Health Service. It shows that breast cancer death rates declined an average of 3.4 percent between 1995 and 1998. That's more than double the rate of decline—[*applause*].

There are still many high medical hurdles that need to be cleared, and we have enough experience with cancer to know that we'll suffer some disappointments and setbacks along the way. But for the first time in human history, we can say with some measure of confidence that the war on cancer is winnable.

With this hope comes responsibility. Now is the time to bolster our efforts. We'll increase funding at the National Institutes of Health by $2.8 billion in 2002.

We must continue to raise awareness about the importance of early detection and increased access to screening services. We need to close the treatment gap between research discoveries and treatment options, so that cancer victims have access to the latest technology.

I want to thank Secretary Tommy Thompson for his efforts to encourage States to provide Medicaid coverage to low-income women diagnosed with breast cancer. I'm committed to passing a strong Patients' Bill of Rights this year to provide women with needed access to life-saving clinical trials and medical specialists.

I hope, I believe, and I pray that we're on the verge of great victories against cancer. You've seen the great victories already, in the lives of many people in this room.

Every survivor of cancer is a defeat for cancer and a triumph for faith and courage and hope. We will not rest until our victory against breast cancer is complete.

I want to thank you all for your good work, your courage, and have a great race.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:12 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Ambassador-designate to Hungary Nancy Goodman Brinker, founding chair, Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation; and country/western singer Jo Dee Messina.

Statement on Renewal of Normal Trade Relations Status for China
June 1, 2001

Earlier today I informed Congress of my decision to extend normal trade relations status for China, as every President has done since 1980. This decision advances the economic and security interests of the American people, and I urge Congress to support it.

Normal trade relations—a status which virtually every other country in the world receives from the United States—is in the interests of American workers, some 400,000 of whom are employed in or benefit directly from America's trade with China.

Trade is in the interests of American farmers, who last year exported more than $3 billion to China and Hong Kong and who this year should export even more as China removes bans on key American products like citrus, wheat, and meat.

Trade is in the interests of American business, nearly 80 percent of which are small or medium sized, which last year increased their overall exports to China by 24 percent, making China our 11th largest export market.

Trade is in the interests of American consumers, especially those who live from paycheck to paycheck and depend on inexpensive goods from China to enhance their quality of life.

Fair trade is essential not only to improving living standards for Americans but also for a strong and productive relationship with China. Normal trade relations status is important if we are to promote American values of transparency and accountability and ensure that the Chinese Government adheres to the rule of law in its dealings with its own people as well as with the international community.

Renewal of normal trade relations also sends a clear but simple message to the people of China: The United States is committed to helping China become part of the new international trading system so that

the Chinese people can enjoy the better life that comes from economic choice and freedom.

The United States has a huge stake in the emergence of an economically open, politically stable, and secure China. Recent events have shown not only that we need to speak frankly and directly about our differences but that we also need to maintain dialog and cooperate with one another on those areas where we have common interests. An important area where the interests of our two countries converge is in maintaining a healthy trading relationship. Renewing normal trade relations status for China will only make those ties stronger.

NOTE: The related memorandum of June 1 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Renewal of Normal Trade Relations Status for China
June 1, 2001

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I hereby transmit a report, including my reasons for determining that continuation of the waiver currently in effect for the People's Republic of China under subsection 402(d)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974 (the "Act"), as amended, will substantially promote the objectives of section 402 of the Act.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate. The related memorandum of June 1 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Renewal of Normal Trade Relations Status for Vietnam
June 1, 2001

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I hereby transmit a report including my reasons for determining that continuation of the waiver currently in effect for Vietnam under subsection 402(d)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (the "Act"), will substantially promote the objectives of section 402 of the Act.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate. The related memorandum of June 1 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the Terrorist Bombing in Tel Aviv, Israel
June 1, 2001

I condemn in the strongest terms the heinous terrorist attack in Tel Aviv this Sabbath evening. There is no justification for senseless attacks against innocent civilians. This illustrates the urgent need for an immediate, unconditional cessation of violence. I call upon Chairman Arafat to condemn this act and to call for an immediate cease fire. My deepest condolences and those of the American people go out to the victims and their families.

NOTE: The statement referred to Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority.

The President's Radio Address
June 2, 2001

Good morning. Over the last few months I have often used this radio time to advocate major tax relief. Today I'm pleased to report success. Soon Congress will send me a bill reducing Federal income taxes by $1.35 trillion over the next 11 years, and I will proudly sign it.

Under the new law, more than 98 million Americans who pay income taxes will be owed a refund. This year most single taxpayers will receive checks for $300; single-parent taxpayers will receive up to $500; and married couples will receive a check for up to $600. Over the next 10 years, the per-child tax credit will double from $500 to $1,000; the marriage penalty will be reduced; and the death tax will be completely abolished.

Some other provisions of the tax bill haven't received quite as much attention, but they will make a great difference in the lives of many Americans. For low-income families, the child tax credit will now be partially refundable. Right now, many poor families don't qualify for the credit because they don't pay income taxes at all. Soon, they will receive a tax credit to help meet the cost of raising their children.

The new tax law also encourages higher contributions to retirement plans. In years to come, you'll have the chance to put more money into your IRA or 401k. You can better prepare for your later years, sending less of your money to Washington and more into your own savings.

I'm especially pleased by what these reforms will do for families that adopt children. Adoptive parents have a special calling, giving a loving home to children who otherwise would have none. The new law will double the maximum adoption tax credit to $10,000 and make the credit permanent. And regardless of their expenses, parents who adopt children with special needs will be able to claim this tax credit in the year the adoption is completed.

Tax relief is an important bipartisan achievement, and now we must build on that momentum to improve our public schools. We are within reach of historic education reform. So far, the signs are very good. Both parties have been working together, and I hope both parties will vote together as well.

The plan I have sent to Congress stresses local control of schools, instead of trying to run the schools from Washington. The plan calls for accountability, requiring that every school set high standards and measure results. My plan gives flexibility to schools in meeting these standards and

more freedom to parents in making their own choices.

Skeptics may claim that these education reforms are too much to hope for, but that's what used to be said about tax relief. The truth is that real reform is possible, if we lay our partisan differences aside and work together in the interests of the American people.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 11:45 a.m. on May 31 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on June 2. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 1 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on the Death of King Birenda of Nepal
June 2, 2001

I am deeply saddened and shocked at King Birenda's untimely death. I also mourn the loss of Queen Aiswarya and other family members and extend my deepest sympathies to the King's extended family. I send my condolences to the Nepalese people during this difficult period. Our prayers are with the Government and people of Nepal.

Remarks at Everglades National Park, Florida
June 4, 2001

Thank you all very much. Thank you. Thank you, Brother. [*Laughter*] I love my brother. People in Florida are lucky to have this good man as Governor.

I'm honored to be here with two fine United States Senators; thank you both for being here. Senator Graham, thanks for flying down with us, and Senator Nelson, it was good to see you at the airport today. Peter Deutsch—this is his district—Congressman, thanks so much for coming. We're honored to have you here. Congressman—I just call her Ileana—[*laughter*]—thanks so very much for being here, Ileana, and same to you, Lincoln. I'm honored that you're here. The two chairmen, Chairman Shaw and Chairman Young, I'm honored that you all are here as well. I don't see Congressperson Meek—I think she was going to be here—she's not.

But Jerry, I appreciate you. I appreciate your staff. I appreciate so very much Maureen Finnerty for giving us the briefing, and I appreciate Larry Belli as well for taking time to chopper over this beautiful slice of heaven. Thank you both. And thank all your staff for making this experience such a meaningful experience for all of us. It's an honor to be here, especially in these surroundings.

Visitors from around the world come to this beautiful State to see the coasts and the Keys and the sandy beaches. Today we're standing in just as wondrous a scene in Florida and just as an important part of this State. It commands our care and attention. This area needs our protection, and I am here to join with your Governor in the cause of preserving and protecting the Florida Everglades.

Last week I visited the great Sequoia National Park in California. Just to get there we covered many miles of land that appeared exactly as it did to the first people who saw it. The same can be said of these surroundings and of this park. They are here to be appreciated, not changed. Their beauty is beyond our power to improve.

Our job here is to be good stewards of the Everglades, to restore what has been damaged and to reduce the risk of harm. The Everglades National Park was established more than 50 years ago. It is not just a beautiful place to visit but, as everybody down here knows, is a vital part of south Florida's ecosystem. The park extends nearly 1.4 million acres and is our country's largest remaining subtropical wilderness. It includes most of Florida Bay, mangrove forests, coastal prairie, cypress forests, pine lands, and freshwater streams that form, as they are now called, the River of Grass.

We're also visitors today in the home of 68 endangered species and the only place on Earth where crocodiles and alligators live side by side. We're kind of hoping that's the way it gets to be in the United States Congress one of these days. [*Laughter*]

Over the same half century, since the park was created, south Florida's population has doubled many times over, and it will continue to grow. For ages, the waters of the Everglades have sustained animal life. Today, south Florida's human population relies upon them as well. Growth and progress are desirable, and environmental destruction is not inevitable. We must build and plan with respect for nature's prior claims.

Lost, if we are careless, are the sparrows and wading birds, panthers and bears who live here, and the chance for future generations to see these creatures in the place that nature gave them. We must meet the demands of growth but without harming the very things that give Florida and the Everglades their beauty.

For its part, the Federal Government carries important responsibilities and stewardship. It is not enough to regulate and dictate from afar. To preserve places like this, we must bring to our work a new spirit of respect and cooperation, what I call a new environmentalism for the 21st century. This was the spirit behind the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan, which passed Congress last year with strong bipartisan majorities in both Houses. The late Senator John Chafee of Rhode Island set the law in motion. It was advanced by the good work of a New Hampshire Senator, Bob Smith, and received crucial support from the Florida delegation, especially from former Governor and current United States Senator Bob Graham. It shows—protecting the Everglades shows that bipartisanship is possible but, more importantly, crucial to doing the will of the American people.

When we talk about empowering State and local governments to do more to protect the environment, we do not mean Washington will do less. We mean that the Federal Government will work more closely and effectively with people closest to the problem and, therefore, best equipped to solve it. Everglades restoration is a good example. It is a long-term commitment shared by the Federal Government and by the State of Florida. Restoration will not take years, but it'll take decades. It will require the best efforts of all involved for a long period of time, from government officials to tribal leaders to landowners and environmentalists. The hard work, patience, and good will of these groups have brought us thus far in restoring the Everglades. We will need the same qualities to finish the job in years ahead.

For my administration, the people of Florida can count on the commitment to carry out this important project. My budget for next year proposes an investment of $219 million, a 36 percent increase from last year. Working together, the State of Florida and the Federal Government will

provide nearly $8 billion in the coming decades for Everglade restoration.

The Federal Government has clear responsibility for the Everglades, as in each of the nearly 400 other national parks. In recent years, that obligation has sometimes been neglected. Many parks have lacked the resources they need for their basic care and maintenance. My administration will restore and renew America's national parks. Last week I announced our National Parks Legacy Project, a major investment in preserving places such as this. We will clear up nearly $5 billion in maintenance to make our parks more inviting and accessible to all Americans.

We are also the first administration to request full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. This fund provides Florida and other States with the means to set aside new parks, vital habitats, and restore threatened ecosystems.

To protect our parks and their inhabitants, we must have the best available information, so I've directed Secretary Norton to prepare an annual report that describes the condition of our parks and offer specific recommendations to improve them. I've also asked the people who know our parks best, our rangers, to prepare stewardship plans.

As many of you know, Florida was recently voted as America's best State park system. To be the best, you have to assemble the best team for the job. And joining Secretary Norton in that effort will be a new Director of the National Park Service. You know her well. I'm pleased to announce that Fran Mainella, Florida's director of State parks, is my choice to lead the National Park Service. She's been a steady and conscientious steward of Florida's 500,000 acres of park lands. With the support of Senators Graham and Nelson and their colleagues, I'm hopeful she will soon assume responsibility for America's more than 80 million acres of parkland. Under her leadership, the National Park Service will continue to do its very important work.

I respect our park rangers, the folks who work in our national parks, a lot. Theirs is an incredibly tough job. Many times it's a thankless job. So on behalf of your Government and the people of the United States, thank you for your dedication to America. And thank you so very much for welcoming us to America's River of Grass.

Thank you all for coming. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:15 a.m. at the Royal Palm Visitors Center. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; Representatives Lincoln Diaz-Balart, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, C. W. Bill Young, chairman, Committee on Appropriations, and E. Clay Shaw, Jr., chairman, Ways and Means Social Security Subcommittee; Jerry Belson, Regional Director, Southeastern Region, National Park Service; and Maureen Finnerty, Superintendent, and Lawrence A. Belli, Deputy Superintendent, Everglades National Park. The President also referred to Title VI, Section 601—Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan, part of Public Law 106–541, the Water Resources Development Act of 2000.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Hispanic Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters in Miami, Florida
June 4, 2001

The President. It's been my honor to address community leaders from many nations in our hemisphere. Miami is the international capital of South America and Central America. It's one of the most vibrant cities in our Nation, and another reason why it's so culturally rich.

We had a wide-ranging discussion about different countries in our hemisphere. But I started off with a discussion about this administration's firm commitment to making sure our own neighborhood is free and democratic and trades—actively trades, so that we can promote wealth throughout the hemisphere. The best foreign policy for this country begins with having a neighborhood that's peaceful and free and secure and prosperous.

And I was able to share with the leaders here how pleased I was that the Summit of the Americas went well, particularly the embrace—the fact that 34 democratically elected leaders from our hemisphere, all but one nation, was represented there.

We had a great discussion, and it's so important for the President of the United States to sit at the same table with the leaders of this hemisphere. And they were—in our meetings where we were able just to sit around without a lot of people watching, we were able to have a free discussion. And they—I was able to explain our vision; they were able to share their problems. And many times, this great Nation of ours would be willing to help as much as we possibly can.

I am confident and optimistic that our hemisphere is going to be more free and more prosperous than it's ever been. As we've discussed here, there are some problem areas, but that's what—that's what we need to do. We need to discuss the problem areas and come together to figure out ways to solve them.

Anyway, I'm so thankful and so gracious—I'm gracious that my brother Jeb is concerned about the hemisphere, as well. I'm thankful that Mel Martinez, a product of the State of Florida, has agreed to see the Cabinet. I'm also thankful that these two people from the United States Congress, two great leaders, are—[*applause*].

Thank you for coming.

Cuba

Q. [*Inaudible*]

The President. Yes, we'll talk about Cuba again, of course.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:05 p.m. at the Omni Colonnade Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Tax Relief Celebration in Tampa, Florida
June 4, 2001

The President. Thank you all very much. It is good to be back in the Tampa area. I remember the last time I was here was right around the corner, at the stadium. Many of you were there. Thanks for coming then, and thanks for coming now.

I appreciate my brother giving me credit for the rain, but the truth of the matter is, the current Governor and the future

Governor gets credit for the rain, Jeb Bush. He's not only a great brother; he's a great Governor. He's the kind of fellow who does in office what he said he's going to do. We need more of that kind of talk in politics.

I'm honored to be traveling today with the Secretary of HUD, Mel Martinez, from the great State of Florida. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. We're here with members of the congressional delegation, Congressmen Davis, Miller, Young, and Putnam, and I want you all to give a huge round of applause for those Congressmen who were bold enough to vote for you to have a tax cut. [*Applause*] They did the right thing. They listened to the people. They heard the people speak loud and clear. And when that bill came up in front of the Congress, some of the members from this congressional delegation didn't blink; they did the right thing.

I'm honored to be here as well with Speaker Feeney and Senator McKay from the statehouse, hard-working members of the Florida delegation at the statehouse. I want to thank my friends, the Bellamy Brothers, for being here. It's good to see you all again. I want to thank my friend George Steinbrenner as well for opening up this beautiful park.

A year ago, tax relief was supposed to be a political impossibility. Six months ago, it was supposed to be a political liability. Today, folks, tax relief is reality. I have the honor of signing the largest tax relief bill in 20 years.

It's thanks to the American people that we're going to have meaningful tax relief. It's thanks to the thousands of hard-working Americans who made it clear at the ballot box, through phone calls, through e-mails, through letting everybody who is elected know that once we meet our needs at Washington, DC, it's important to always remember whose money we're spending. That surplus is not the Government's money. That surplus is the people's money. And in a couple of weeks, we're going to start sending checks back to the American people.

This year, if you're single, you get a $300 check. If you're raising a family, you get a $600 check in the mail. Every taxpayer in America who wrote a check to the Government is going to start getting money back this year, as soon as possible. But that's just the beginning. That's just the beginning.

We're also going to cut all rates. You remember over the course of the campaign, ours was a campaign that made it clear we're going to be fair to the American people, that we didn't believe in the Washington talk about targeted tax cuts, that we felt that a targeted tax cut meant folks in Washington got to decide who won and who didn't win, that the best tax policy—the best tax relief policy was to say, if you pay taxes, you get relief, everybody who pays taxes in America. All rates will be cut. Everybody who pays taxes is going to get not only tax relief this year but tax relief in the coming years.

During the course of the campaign, we said how unfair the marriage penalty was. The marriage penalty is unfair, and we eased the penalty of marriage in the Tax Code coming down the road.

During the course of the campaign, I heard from hundreds of small-business owners and farmers and ranchers, who said loud and clear, "We're sick and tired of having our assets taxed twice," who said loud and clear, "The death tax is unfair." Under the bill I'm going to sign this week, we finally eliminate the death tax in the American Tax Code.

Tax relief is the right thing to do. It's an answer to a prayer, such as this one: "Lead us not into temptation." The big surplus accumulating in Washington was one great temptation for the spenders. And once we met basic needs, with a reasonable growth in our budget, instead of increasing the size of your Federal Government, what we decided to do was to put faith in the

American people. We would rather have you spend the money.

It's a fundamental difference of opinion. For those that voted against tax relief, they basically said to America, "We can spend your money better than you can."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. It's just a philosophical difference of opinion. But one of the things that's loud and clear in this campaign is there is a group of folks in Washington who now understand where the power of this country is; it's with the people.

This bill is more than just tax relief. It is more than just preventing Washington from growing the size of Government. This bill reflects a philosophy that says, we trust the American people more than we trust Government. It's a philosophy represented in the hundreds of tax families that I had the opportunity of campaigning with all across the country.

One such family is here with us today, the Fuller family: Stephen Fuller, Quita Fuller, Andrew and Anna Fuller. They're folks from this part of the world. He's a business manager. He's a hard-working man, and so is she. They're deeply concerned about their family and their family's future. This family will save $1,925 when the tax relief plan is fully phased in. They will receive an $800 check this year, because the child credit kicks in immediately and increases to $1,000 per child.

And here's what the issue is about, folks. It's about, do you want the Fullers spending that $1,900, or do you want the Federal Government?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. The people who stood on the side of tax relief understand we met our Nation's needs. But when it came down to it, with their aye vote they said, "We trust the Fullers to spend that $1,900. It's their money to begin with." We think they can better allocate that money than the Federal Government. We think they know how best to save for their children. We think they know how best to set aside money to make sure their family has got a safe and secure future. No, this tax relief bill is a victory for the American people.

There's a new attitude beginning to develop in Washington. This wasn't just a Republican bill. There were some wise Democrats that came along, too. And this coming Thursday, when I sit there at the White House and sign the bill, I'll be praising not only the Republicans who helped, but I'll be praising those Democrats who helped, as well. There's a new spirit in Washington, DC. There's a spirit of accomplishment. There's a spirit that says we can show the American people that it's possible to get positive things done. And we're just beginning.

We're working on an education bill that sets high standards for every child in America, a bill that trusts local people to run the schools, a bill that believes in accountability and results, a bill that says loud and clear, no child will be left behind in America.

We're strengthening the military. We will boost the pay for those who wear the uniform. We will improve the housing. We will improve the health benefits. And we will have a clear mission, which is to be trained well enough to fight and win war and, therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place.

Ours is the first administration in a long time that has laid out a vision for a secure energy policy for America. It talks about the need to conserve and to use technologies to bring more efficiencies to the use of energy. But it also talks about a realistic, commonsense way to protect our environment and, at the same time, bring new energy supplies, so consumers will be able to have safe and secure and reliable energy sources.

Ours is an administration that talks about Medicare and Social Security reform. No, there's a new spirit of accomplishment in Washington, DC, and there's a bigger task at hand, as well.

It's one thing to pass legislation, and that's going to be important. But there's a larger calling for this country. Our Nation must come together to unite, to usher in what I call an era of personal responsibility, an era in our country where each of us who is fortunate enough to be a mom or a dad tells our children on a daily basis, "We love you with all our heart;" an era in our country where if you're fortunate, you turn to a neighbor and say to a neighbor in need, "What can I do to help, brother? What can I do to help?" We must rally the great faith of America and the faith-based institutions across this land to provide help and care and comfort to people in need.

In order to usher in a period of responsibility, it requires all of us who are in positions of responsibility to understand the awesome responsibility we bear. It is my high honor to be the President of the greatest land on the face of the Earth. I take this responsibility very seriously. I understand people watch the office, and I can promise you, I will not let you down.

We are just beginning to show the American people what's possible. And we're just beginning to help work with you, the moms and dads and hard-working honest citizens, to change our culture in America, so that this great land holds out its promise for every single citizen, so people aren't left behind, so we're united with a common purpose of one land, indivisible, under God.

Thank you all for coming. God bless. It's my honor.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:15 p.m. at Legends Field. In his remarks, he referred to Florid State Representative Tom Feeney; Florida State Senator John M. McKay; country/western singers David and Howard Bellamy; and George M. Steinbrenner III, principal owner, New York Yankees.

Remarks to Habitat for Humanity Supporters in Tampa
June 5, 2001

Thank you very much. Mel, thank you very much. I'm so honored Mel agreed to become the Cabinet Secretary of HUD. He brings a fresh look and a true spirit of compassion to the job, plus he's a Floridian. [*Laughter*] He's going to make a big difference.

It's great to be here with the Lieutenant Governor. Tell Governor Bush, I hope he slept in well. [*Laughter*] Here the rest of us are out working for a better Florida and a better America. [*Laughter*]

I'm so honored to be here with members of the congressional delegation Davis, Miller, Putnam, and Young. Thank you, Congressmen, for being here, and I look forward to flying back to Washington with you today.

Millard, it is an honor to be here with you. I talk about soldiers in the armies of compassion; Millard is the general, and Corporal Bush reported for duty today. [*Laughter*] I did run into Sergeant Doris Meyer. [*Laughter*] I can barely lift my arm. [*Laughter*] What a great, great honor it was to be here with Roger and the leadership of Habitat for this part of the State and all the volunteers, people who work hard, sweat hard, and end up the day with a beautiful smile on your face.

I really wish I could spend more time building. It is one of these moments of life where you realize there is something greater than yourself in life and that you get the joy of helping somebody help themselves.

Johana, thank you and your family for allowing for this invasion of your privacy. But it is important for America to see the fact that, one, you'll own a home, and two, that you're willing to work for it. And as importantly, there are hundreds of other Americans who are willing to stand side by side with you so that you can enjoy one of the great benefits of America—owning your own property, having a piece of the future of America—so that your future and the future of your *ninos* is very hopeful. And that's what America is about. This is the land of hope and promise and opportunity. And as importantly, it is a land of compassionate people.

I like to tell people that I wish I knew the law that I could sign that would make people love one another. That's not the Government; that comes from something much greater than people, as you all know. This is a land of faith and compassion. It is a land of thousands and hundreds of people who ask the question when they wake up, what can I do to love my neighbor? That is not a Government function. That doesn't happen because of Government, and you and I know that. And that's why it is so important for our Nation to recognize the promise and power of faith in America. And that's why our Government should not fear working side by side with faith-based organizations. Quite the opposite: We ought to fund faith-based organizations so that they can do their duty in love and compassion.

Oh, there are some in our society who are skeptical about funding faith. I hear it all the time in the Halls of Congress, "We can't fund faith-based organizations." If that's the case, are they willing to eliminate the line item for programs such as Habitat for Humanity in the budget? I say they shouldn't. As a matter of fact, I'm submitting a budget next year that triples the amount of money available for programs such as Habitat for Humanity. Should we eliminate college scholarships where a child can go to a faith-based university? Should we say Medicaid or Medicare recipients can't take their Federal money to a religious hospital?

To the skeptics of faith in our society, I say, come to Habitat Humanity building sites. Listen to the opening prayer, so eloquently delivered today by a fellow Methodist. Listen to the words that are said that inspire people to take an extra step to help a neighbor in need.

No, those who worry about faith in our society and Government's willingness to stand side by side with faith don't understand the power of faith and the promise of faith and the hope of faith. And if this Nation expects to fulfill its promise, we ought to welcome faith-based and community-based programs all throughout America, encourage them to flourish, ask others to come and join, call upon mentors who are willing to put their arm around a child in need, welcome faith-based programs into our prisons, who understand that when you change a heart, you change a man or a woman's life.

No, this is a fabulous nation because of our people and the compassion buried in the hearts and souls of the American people. And it's such a huge honor to come to a site of love and a site of compassion and a site of care, to work side by side with fellow Americans on kind of a hot day—[*laughter*]—with one thing in mind, to help Johana and, therefore, help our society and help America continue to be the greatest country on the face of the Earth.

I'm so honored to be here, thankful for the chance to work. And thank you all so very much for what you do.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:15 a.m. at a building site. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Gov. Frank Brogan of Florida; Millard Fuller, founder and president, Habitat for Humanity; Doris Meyer, house leader volunteer, and Roger Girson, chairman of the

board, Hillsborough County Habitat for Humanity; and Johana Rodriguez, whose home the President helped build.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With the Senate Education Working Group and an Exchange With Reporters
June 5, 2001

The President. Listen, thank you all for coming. It is good to see Members of the Senate coming back from the Memorial Day break. We're here to discuss the education bill that has been passed by the House of Representatives that will be debated soon, I believe. We hope soon—this afternoon on the floor of the United States Senate. And I, of course, am anxious to talk to the chairman of the Education Committee, Senator Kennedy, about getting the bill done.

There's been a lot of discussion about the bill, a lot of agreements that have been made. There's been a lot of hard work from a lot of people around this table, and my hope is, is that we don't try to add to or subtract from the bill after our agreements have been made.

I look forward to hearing from the Members about how best to get this bill complete. I think we have an opportunity—I know we have an opportunity to show the American people that although the structure of the Senate may have been altered somewhat, we still can get things done in a way that's positive for America. So, welcome the Members here.

Secondly, I am deeply concerned, as are Members of the Senate around this table, about the situation in the U.S. steel industry. And we're concerned about unfair trade practices that may be affecting the economics of the steel industry and, therefore, call upon the International Trade Commission under Section 201 to have a full investigation of the industry, the imports coming into the United States, and make sure that our industry is not being affected by unfair trade practices.

I'll be glad to answer a few questions, and then we look forward to a discussion.

Bipartisanship

Q. Mr. President, Senator Kennedy is the chairman of this committee because Senator Jeffords is leaving the party, saying that he could no longer—because of the conservative bent of the party, he could no longer work as well with you and other leaders of——

The President. Why do you have to make the guy feel bad in front of the TV cameras?

Q. Because I get paid good money for it, sir. [*Laughter*] Let's not get into your tax cut proposal now.

What does that say about your ability to oversee a party that's supposedly supposed to have a broad tent and, specifically, your ability to govern as you promised, as a bipartisan leader?

The President. Well, that's what this meeting is all about. And there's going to be an opportunity for us to work on a variety of issues. We did so on the tax relief package. That package got a pretty good Democratic vote out of the Senate and a good Democratic vote out of the House. We'll do so on the education plan.

There's a Patients' Bill of Rights that's working its way through the Senate. I'm confident we'll have a series of discussions on that. As a matter of fact, there's an author of one of the bills here, and there's two authors of a secondary bill—a second

bill here. And as you know, we've been working with Senator Frist and Senator Jeffords on that alternative to try to make it conform to some principles that I discussed. There's going to be a lot of give and take on key issues.

And I think when people see the fine print of the education bill, they'll find there's been a lot of give and take in order to get a good bill out that improves public education. So I'm confident we'll be able to work together.

Multilateral Initiative on Steel

Q. And the steel ruling, is this going to anger European allies going into the summit?

The President. Ron [Ron Fournier, Associated Press], I certainly hope it doesn't anger European allies. As you know, I've told the world that we are going to have an active international—internationalist foreign policy, with U.S. interests at its heart. And it's in our Nation's interests to make sure that if there are unfair trade practices in the steel industry, that we address them in an aggressive way, which this administration will do.

Yes, Jim [Jim Angle, Fox News]. Nice seeing your brother the other day.

Q. Yes, sir. He was happy to see you.

The President. He speaks highly of you. [*Laughter*]

Education Legislation

Q. Sir, do you have any fears that the changeover in the Senate will threaten the education reform? Is that the reason for calling this meeting?

The President. The reason for calling this meeting is because I wanted to touch base with the people that are making the bill move, to let them know how much I appreciate the hard work that has gone into the bill, ask what we can do to help make it move as quickly as possible so that we can sign a bill in time for public districts around the United States to plan for next fall.

And one reason why the Secretary of Education is here is, he is going to be in charge of implementing the new bill. And that's why they're here.

Q. You have more than 100 amendments still to be dealt with, sir. Is that something you would like to ask the Members here to streamline? Is there some way to make the process move a little faster?

The President. That's going to be up to the chairman, and I am sure he will have a few good ideas. He has been around here a lot longer than I have, and he'll have good ideas to move the bill as quickly as possible.

My only request is that we adhere to the spirit of our negotiations as best as possible. I know the Senator is a man of his word. Our administration is, as well. I am confident we can get something done in a positive way.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. Mr. President, what are you expecting to accomplish by sending CIA Director Tenet to the Middle East, and what do you feel about the recent events out there?

The President. Well, we believe strongly we need to stop the cycle of violence before anything can happen. And I have been on the phone, and the Secretary of State has been on the phone, urging all parties involved to adhere to the cease-fire. We believe enough progress has been made on the cease-fire that it is time to send George Tenet to the Middle East to start serious discussions at the security level about how to make sure the cease-fire continues.

And we are very hopeful that this will—this step will continue to—will be a part of building confidence in the region, confidence between skeptical leaders. And George is going to be on a very important mission, and we are all hopeful in the United States that the mission begins to achieve the objective.

Once the violence has ceased, once there is a cease-fire in place, once there are strong security arrangements back in place,

then we can start having political discussions.

Q. Former——

The President. The Mitchell report was a very good report, and I called former Senator Mitchell to thank him for his contributions. Our Government and our Nation supports the Mitchell report. The Mitchell report clearly says: Step one is to stop the violence. And that is where our efforts are from our Government. We are doing everything we can to make it clear to all parties that we will work as hard as we can to stop the violence.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:08 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former Senator George J. Mitchell, chairman, Sharm el-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee. The committee's report was issued April 30. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on a Multilateral Initiative on Steel
June 5, 2001

This administration is committed to free trade as an engine of growth. As part of our free trade agenda, we are committed to ensuring that American industry and American workers can compete on a level playing field. That is why today I am announcing my intent to launch an initiative to respond to the challenges facing the U.S. steel industry. This initiative will be designed to restore market forces to world steel markets and eliminate the practices that harm our steel industry and its workers.

The U.S. steel industry has been affected by a 50-year legacy of foreign government intervention in the market and direct financial support of their steel industries. The result has been significant excess capacity, inefficient production, and a glut of steel on world markets.

My decision to pursue this initiative comes after extensive consultations by members of the Cabinet with our industry, our steelworkers, and interested Members of Congress. We have discussed the challenges facing U.S. steel manufacturers, and we understand that we have a critical stake in a healthy U.S. steel industry.

Thus, I intend to take the following steps. First, I am directing the United States Trade Representative, in cooperation with the Secretary of Commerce and Secretary of the Treasury, to initiate negotiations with our trading partners seeking the near-term elimination of inefficient excess capacity in the steel industry worldwide, in a manner consistent with applicable U.S. laws.

Second, I am directing the U.S. Trade Representative, together with the Secretaries of Commerce and the Treasury, to initiate negotiations on the rules that will govern steel trade in the future and eliminate the underlying market-distorting subsidies that led to the current conditions in the first place. Absent strict disciplines barring government support, direct or indirect, for inefficient steelmaking capacity, the problems confronting the U.S. steel industry—and the steel industry worldwide—will only recur.

We see these negotiations—and the goal of restoring market forces—as being in our interest and in the interest of our trading partners and their steel industries. That is why we would like to work cooperatively with our trading partners in pursuing this initiative.

Third, I am directing the U.S. Trade Representative to request the initiation of

an investigation of injury to the United States industry by the International Trade Commission under section 201 of the Trade Act of 1974. This action is consistent with our WTO obligations.

This three-part strategy, coupled with further restructuring of the U.S. industry, should help the industry meet the challenges it faces. I look forward to working together with the industry, the steelworkers, Congress, and our international trading partners in support of this important initiative.

Remarks at the Dedication of the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford, Virginia

June 6, 2001

Thank you all very much. At ease, and be seated. Thank you for that warm welcome.

Governor Gilmore, thank you so very much for your friendship and your leadership here in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Lieutenant Governor Hager and Attorney General Earley, thank you, as well, for your hospitality.

I'm honored to be traveling today with Secretary Principi, Veterans Affairs Department. I'm honored to be traveling today with two fantastic United States Senators from the Commonwealth of Virginia, Senator Warner and Senator Allen. Congressmen Goode and Goodlatte are here, as well. Thank you for your presence. The Ambassador from France—it's a pleasure to see him, and thank you for your kind words. Delegate Putney, Chaplain Sessions, Bob Slaughter, Richard Burrow, distinguished guests, and my fellow Americans. I'm honored to be here today to dedicate this memorial. And this is a proud day for the people of Virginia and for the people of the United States. I'm honored to share it with you, on behalf of millions of Americans.

We have many World War II and D-day veterans with us today, and we're honored by your presence. We appreciate your example, and thank you for coming. And let it be recorded, we're joined by one of the most distinguished of them all, a man who arrived at Normandy by glider with the 82d Airborne Division, a man who serves America to this very hour. Please welcome Maj. Gen. Strom Thurmond. [*Applause*]

You have raised a fitting memorial to D-day, and you have put it in just the right place, not on a battlefield of war but in a small Virginia town, a place like so many others that were home to the men and women who help liberate a continent.

Our presence here, 57 years removed from that event, gives testimony to how much was gained and how much was lost—what was gained that first day was a beach and then a village and then a country. And, in time, all of western Europe would be freed from fascism and its armies.

The achievement of Operation Overlord is nearly impossible to overstate, in its consequences for our own lives and the life of the world. Free societies in Europe can be traced to the first footprints on the first beach on June 6, 1944.

What was lost on D-day we can never measure and never forget. When the day was over, America and her Allies had lost at least 2,500 of the bravest men ever to wear a uniform. Many thousands more would die on the days that followed. They scaled towering cliffs, looking straight up into enemy fire. They dropped into grassy fields sown with landmines. They overran machine gun nests hidden everywhere,

punched through walls of barbed wire, overtook bunkers of concrete and steel. The great journalist Ernie Pyle said, "It seemed to me a pure miracle that we ever took the beach at all. The advantages were all theirs, the disadvantages all ours. And yet," said Pyle, "we got on."

A father and his son both fell during Operation Overlord. So did 33 pairs of brothers, including a boy having the same name as his hometown, Bedford T. Hoback, and his brother, Raymond. Their sister, Lucille, is with us today. She has recalled that Raymond was offered an early discharge for health reasons, but he turned it down. "He didn't want to leave his brother," she remembers. "He had come over with him, and he was going to stay with him." Both were killed on D-day. The only trace of Raymond Hoback was his Bible, found in the sand. Their mother asked that Bedford be laid to rest in France with Raymond, so that her sons might always be together.

Perhaps some of you knew Gordon White, Sr. He died here just a few years ago, at the age of 95, the last living parent of a soldier who died on D-day. His boy, Henry, loved his days on the family farm and was especially fond of a workhorse named Major. Family members recall how Gordon just couldn't let go of Henry's old horse, and he never did. For 25 years after the war, Major was cherished by Gordon White as a last link to his son and a link to another life.

Upon this beautiful town fell the heaviest share of American losses on D-day, 19 men from a community of 3,200, 4 more afterwards. When people come here, it is important to see the town as the monument itself. Here were the images these soldiers carried with them and the thought of when they were afraid. This is the place they left behind, and here was the life they dreamed of returning to. They did not yearn to be heroes. They yearned for those long summer nights again and harvest time and paydays. They wanted to see Mom and Dad again and hold their sweethearts or wives or, for one young man who lived here, to see that baby girl born while he was away.

Bedford has a special place in our history. But there were neighborhoods like these all over America, from the smallest villages to the greatest cities. And somehow they all produced a generation of young men and women who, on a date certain, gathered and advanced as one and changed the course of history. Whatever it is about America that has given us such citizens, it is the greatest quality we have, and may it never leave us.

In some ways, modern society is very different from the nation that the men and women of D-day knew, and it is sometimes fashionable to take a cynical view of the world. But when the calendar reads the 6th of June, such opinions are better left unspoken. No one who has heard and read about the events of D-day could possibly remain a cynic. Army Private Andy Rooney was there to survey the aftermath. A lifetime later he would write, "If you think the world is selfish and rotten, go to the cemetery at Colleville overlooking Omaha Beach. See what one group of men did for another on D-day, June 6, 1944."

Fifty-three hundred ships and landing craft, 1,500 tanks, 12,000 airplanes, but in the end, it came down to this: Scared and brave kids by the thousands who kept fighting and kept climbing and carried out General Eisenhower's order of the day—nothing short of complete victory.

For us, nearly six decades later, the order of the day is gratitude. Today we give thanks for all that was gained on the beaches of Normandy. We remember what was lost with respect, admiration, and love.

The great enemies of that era have vanished. And it is one of history's remarkable turns that so many young men from the New World would cross the sea to help liberate the Old. Beyond the peaceful beaches and quiet cemeteries lies a Europe whole and free, a continent of democratic

governments and people more free and hopeful than ever before. This freedom and these hopes are what the heroes of D-day fought and died for. And these, in the end, are the greatest monuments of all to the sacrifices made that day.

When I go to Europe next week, I will reaffirm the ties that bind our nations in a common destiny. These are the ties of friendship and hard experiences. They have seen our nations through a World War and a cold war. Our shared values and experiences must guide us now in our continued partnership and in leading the peaceful democratic revolution that continues to this day.

We have learned that when there is conflict in Europe, America is affected and cannot stand by. We have learned as well, in the years since the war, that America gains when Europe is united and peaceful.

Fifty-seven years ago today, America and the nations of Europe formed a bond that has never been broken. And all of us incurred a debt that can never be repaid. Today, as America dedicates our D-Day Memorial, we pray that our country will always be worthy of the courage that delivered us from evil and saved the free world.

God bless America, and God bless the World War II generation.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:10 p.m. at the memorial. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. James S. Gilmore III, Lt. Gov. John Hager, and former Attorney General Mark L. Earley of Virginia; Francois Bujon de l'Estang, French Ambassador to the United States; Lacey E. Putney, delegate, Virginia House of Delegates; Col. David C. Sessions, USAF, chaplain, 20th Fighter Wing; John Robert Slaughter, chairman, board of directors, and Richard B. Burrow, president, National D-Day Memorial Foundation; Lucille Hoback Boggess, whose brothers, Bedford T. and Raymond Hoback, were killed in Operation Overlord; and journalist Andy Rooney.

Statement on Completion of the North Korea Policy Review
June 6, 2001

Over the past several months, my administration has been reviewing our policy towards North Korea. We have recently discussed the results of our thinking with our close allies, South Korea and Japan.

We have now completed our review. I have directed my national security team to undertake serious discussions with North Korea on a broad agenda to include: improved implementation of the Agreed Framework relating to North Korea's nuclear activities; verifiable constraints on North Korea's missile programs and a ban on its missile exports; and a less threatening conventional military posture.

We will pursue these discussions in the context of a comprehensive approach to North Korea which will seek to encourage progress toward North-South reconciliation, peace on the Korean Peninsula, a constructive relationship with the United States, and greater stability in the region. These are the goals South Korean President Kim Dae-jung and I discussed during his visit here last March. I look forward to working with him.

Our approach will offer North Korea the opportunity to demonstrate the seriousness of its desire for improved relations. If North Korea responds affirmatively and takes appropriate action, we will expand our efforts to help the North Korean people, ease sanctions, and take other political steps.

I have asked Secretary of State Powell to outline our approach to South Korean

Foreign Minister Han when they meet tomorrow here in Washington, and we will also inform our allies in Japan.

NOTE: The statement referred to Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Han Song-su of South Korea.

Remarks on Signing the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001

June 7, 2001

Thank you. Sit down. Behave yourself. You're at the White House. [*Laughter*]

Laura, thank you very much for being here on this historic moment. Mr. Vice President, Secretary O'Neill, Director Daniels, Secretary Evans and Chao are here, as well. Secretary Abraham, Administrator Christine Todd Whitman, Members of the United States Senate, Members of the House of Representatives, fellow Americans, welcome.

Some months ago, in my speech to the joint session of Congress, I had the honor of introducing Steven Ramos to the Nation. Steven is the network administrator for a school district. His wife, Josefina, teaches at a charter school. They have a little girl named Lianna, and they're trying to save for Lianna's college education. High taxes made saving difficult. Last year they paid nearly $8,000 in Federal income taxes. Well, today we're beginning to make life for the Ramos' a lot easier. Today we start to return some of the Ramos' money and not only their money but the money of everybody who paid taxes in the United States of America.

Across the board tax relief does not happen often in Washington, DC. In fact, since World War II, it has happened only twice: President Kennedy's tax cut in the sixties and President Reagan's tax cuts in the 1980s. And now it's happening for the third time, and it's about time.

A year ago tax relief was said to be a political impossibility. Six months ago it was supposed to be a political liability. Today it becomes reality. It becomes reality because of the bipartisan leadership of the Members of the United States Congress, Members like Bill Thomas of California, Ralph Hall of Texas, Charles Grassley of Iowa, Max Baucus of Montana, Zell Miller of Georgia, John Breaux of Louisiana, Trent Lott of Mississippi and the entire leadership team in the Senate, and Denny Hastert of Illinois and the leadership team in the House of Representatives—some Democrats, many Republicans—who worked tirelessly and effectively to produce this important result.

I also want to pay tribute to the members of my administration who worked with Congress to bring about this day: Vice President Cheney, Secretary O'Neill, Director Daniels, and the team inside the White House of Andy Card and Larry Lindsey, Nick Calio, and their staffs.

With us today are 15 of the many families I met as I toured our country making the case for tax relief—hard-working Americans. I was able to talk about their stories and their struggles and their hopes, which made the case for tax relief much stronger than my words could possible convey. And I want to thank you all for coming.

And here at the White House today are representatives of millions of Americans, including labor union members, small-business owners, and family farmers. Your persistence and determination helped bring us to this day. The American people should be proud of your efforts on their behalf, and I personally thank you all for coming.

Tax relief is a great achievement for the American people. Tax relief is the first

achievement produced by the new tone in Washington, and it was produced in record time.

Tax relief is an achievement for families struggling to enter the middle class. For hard-working lower income families, we have cut the bottom rate of Federal income tax from 15 percent to 10 percent. We doubled the per-child tax credit to $1,000 and made it refundable. Tax relief is compassionate, and it is now on the way.

Tax relief is an achievement for middle class families squeezed by high energy prices and credit card debt. Most families can look forward to a $600 tax rebate before they have to pay the September back-to-school bills. And in the years ahead, taxpayers can look forward to steadily declining income tax rates.

Tax relief is an achievement for families that want the Government tax policy to be fair and not penalize them for making good choices, good choices such as marriage and raising a family. So we cut the marriage penalty.

Tax relief makes the code more fair for small businesses and farmers and individuals by eliminating the death tax. Over the long haul, tax relief will encourage work and innovation. It will allow American workers to save more on their pension plan or individual retirement accounts.

Tax relief expands individual freedom. The money we return, or don't take in the first place, can be saved for a child's education, spent on family needs, invested in a home or in a business or a mutual fund or used to reduce personal debt.

The message we send today: It's up to the American people; it's the American people's choice. We recognize, loud and clear, the surplus is not the Government's money. The surplus is the people's money, and we ought to trust them with their own money.

This tax relief plan is principled. We cut taxes for every income-tax payer. We target nobody in; we target nobody out. And tax relief is now on the way.

Today is a great day for America. It is the first major achievement of a new era, an era of steady cooperation. And more achievements are ahead. I thank the Members of Congress in both parties who made today possible. Together, we will lead our country to new progress and new possibilities.

It is now my honor to sign the first broad tax relief in a generation.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:58 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. H.R. 1836, approved June 7, was assigned Public Law No. 107–16.

Remarks to the Fourth National Summit on Fatherhood
June 7, 2001

Thank you all very much for that warm welcome. It's an honor to be introduced by Tommy Thompson, who not only was an outstanding Governor but, I can assure you, is going to be an outstanding Secretary of Health and Human Services. He is bright, capable, smart, and does everything the President tells him. [*Laughter*] He's my buddy. But thank you, Tommy, very much.

I am so honored Members of the United States Congress are here. I appreciate you all being here, Senator Carper, Senator Bayh, Congressman J.C. Watts. If there are other Members of the Congress here, thank you all for coming, as well. Roland Warren, it's good to meet you, sir. I appreciate your focus and effort. I've got something to say about the other two characters up here in a minute. [*Laughter*]

For 7 years, the National Fatherhood Initiative has been a powerful voice for responsible fatherhood. And for those of you involved, on behalf of our Nation, I say thanks from the bottom of our collective hearts. You have generated grassroots support and important national awareness. You've encouraged public officials like me to think and act on this incredibly important issue.

I worked with many of you on the Texas Fatherhood Initiative. We created a statewide public awareness campaign, mobilized community and corporate leadership, established a Texas Fatherhood Resource Center, and lent support to grassroots organizations all across our great State.

Promoting fatherhood was a commitment I made as Governor; it's a commitment I make as President; and it's a commitment I have made every day since our little girls were born in Dallas, Texas.

Two people who have been a central part of the National Fatherhood Initiative are now a valuable part of my administration, the Deputy Director of the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, Don Eberly, and the Acting Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services—and, we hope, a man confirmed soon—Wade Horn. [*Applause*] I was pleased to see Senator Carper leading the applause. [*Laughter*] Thank you guys for your service, and thank you for your willingness to work on behalf of the American people.

The intellectual roots of the fatherhood movement reach back to one exceptional public servant who spoke about the importance of fathers earlier, more often, and more eloquently than any other public figure, former United States Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan of New York. Now, the fatherhood movement counts amongst its supporters a variety of public officials: Republicans Tom Ridge and Secretary of State Colin Powell, great Democrats like Al Gore and Joe Lieberman.

Most States now have initiatives that promote responsible fatherhood, and more than 50 mayors are involved in the National Fatherhood Initiative's bipartisan Mayors Task Force on Fatherhood Promotion. The fatherhood movement is diverse, but it is united by one belief: Fathers have a unique and irreplaceable role in the lives of children.

For our children and for our Nation, nothing is more important than this initiative. Nearly every man who has a child wants to be a good father; I truly believe that. It's a natural longing of the human heart to care for and cherish your child, but this longing must find concrete expression.

Raising a child requires sacrifice, effort, time, and presence. And there is a wide gap between our best intentions and the reality of today's society. More than one-third of American children are living apart from their biological fathers. Of these, five out of six do not see their fathers more than once a week. And 40 percent of the children who live in fatherless households have not seen their fathers in at least a year. Some fathers are forced away by circumstances beyond their control, but many times when a couple with children splits up, the father moves away or simply drifts away.

We know that children who grow up with absent fathers can suffer lasting damage. They are more likely to end up in poverty or drop out of school, become addicted to drugs, have a child out of wedlock, or end up in prison. Fatherlessness is not the only cause of these things, but our Nation must recognize it is an important factor.

There is a familiar litany, but behind every statistic is a child, and a compassionate society can never forget the large place a father occupies in that child's life. Children look to their fathers to provide, even imperfectly, and nurture protection, provide discipline and care, guidance, and most importantly, unconditional love. Fathers are the object of a young child's admiration. They provide their sons and daughters with an example of what it means

to be a good man. And many of us believe a father's love, like a mother's love, even imperfectly, mirrors divine love.

The absence of a father can shatter a child's world. One 14-year-old girl put it this way: "My father left me when I learned to say 'daddy.' Even though my father is not around, in my heart he's always there. Every birthday, every Christmas, I cross my fingers in hopes that my father will come home. Does my wish come true? No. But I never quit looking and hoping."

When children quit looking and stop hoping, something terrible happened to them and to us. Over the past four decades, fatherlessness has emerged as one of our greatest social problems. Yet, during this period, we've also made some important social progress. Today, marriage is often a more equal partnership. Many fathers are more emotionally involved in the lives of their children. And our society now recognizes domestic violence for the violent crime it is. These trends are welcome and noble and overdue.

Many families with one parent do well. Single mothers do amazing work in difficult circumstances, succeeding at a job far harder than most of us can possibly imagine. They deserve our respect, and they deserve our support. And millions of children have strong, loving relationships with their nonresident dads. But on the whole, we must never forget children need their dads, and when they're absent, something is lost.

Fatherlessness has public consequences, so public officials have a role to play. My budget, for example, provides $64 million in 2002 and $315 million over 5 years for programs designed to strengthen fatherhood. We have proposed increased funding for promoting safe and stable families program and are taking steps to help make adoption more affordable. And we have tried to set an example by creating an atmosphere favorable to families in the White House, in the workplace, as should all of us who have responsibility for employees.

Democratic Senator Evan Bayh has taken the lead on fatherhood legislation in the last Congress and will do so again this year. And he deserves our gratitude. I look forward to working with him and Senator Domenici, as well as other key supporters of fatherhood legislation like Nancy Johnson, to secure passage this year of a bill that provides financial support to community based fatherhood programs all across the country.

I'm asking my Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives to develop resource materials to guide urban congregations and other community groups in finding role models for young men who have been raised without fathers. And we will be working with the Office of National Drug Control Policy to enlist dads in our national campaign against drug use.

We have a responsibility to help children who have been born into harsh circumstances and fractured families. As a society, we must work to promote mentors—committed, caring adults in the lives of children.

I always like to say, I wish I knew the law that I could sign that would cause people to love one another. I'm confident these Senators, and I know this Member of the House, would sponsor it. I can assure you the President would sign it. But governments can't cause people to love one another. Love comes from the hearts and souls of citizens who want to help. And we must gather up the great compassion of our society, to encourage loving citizens to put their arm around a child who may not have a dad and say, "Somebody in this country loves you, and somebody cares for you."

There's no substitute for a dad. I recognize that. But there's sure a lot of hope when a child has a mentor. Just look at the record of Big Brothers and Big Sisters in America. They've had an incredible positive effect on the lives of children. Children who meet with a Big Brother and Big Sister

regularly for a year are 46 percent less likely than their peers to start using illegal drugs and 32 percent less likely to assault somebody. They are less likely to skip school and more likely to realize a dream.

Big Brothers and Big Sisters of America is an amazing story. And I want you all to hear this: There are estimates that more than 14 million children in this country could benefit from having a mentor. To begin addressing the need, my budget proposes a $67 million initiative to mentor children whose parents are incarcerated. Our law should encourage responsible fatherhood; when children are abandoned, our society should encourage mentoring.

But ultimately, fatherhood is a deeply personal calling. Our own children are given to our care, and they depend on our love. Every parent knows that raising a child is among the most affirming experiences a human being will ever know. So many of my generation had the same—had this experience. When we held our children for the first time, we really found ourselves. We found a world of duty and love that changed our lives. And since that day—since that day, "dad" has been the most important title I have ever had. [*Applause*] Thank you very much. Thank you.

Children need a father's love and attention, and they also need a loving family. To paraphrase my friend Josh McDowell, a child's greatest source of security today is not only knowing my mom loves me and my dad loves me, but also that Mom and Dad love each other. If we are serious about renewing fatherhood, we must be serious about renewing marriage.

Ultimately, this, too, is a deeply personal calling. Renewing marriage depends on renewing the inward things of the heart, mutual respect and cooperation, support and affirmation, love and devotion. Healthy marriages are not always possible, but we must remember they are incredibly important for children. Our hearts know this, and our Nation must recognize this. "What greater thing is there for two human souls," George Eliot wrote, "than to feel that they are joined for life to strengthen each other in all labor, to rest on each other in all sorrow, to be one with each other in silent, unspeakable memories at the moment of the last parting."

None of us is perfect, and so no marriage and no family is perfect. After all, we all are human. Yet, we need fathers and families precisely because we are human. We all live, it is said, in the shelter of one another. And our urgent hope is that—one of the oldest hopes of humanity—is this, to turn the hearts of children toward their parents and the hearts of parents toward their young. This is the hope of the Fatherhood Initiative. And because of your hard work, America will be a better place.

God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:15 p.m. in the Ticonderoga Room at the Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Tom Ridge of Pennsylvania; Deputy Director of the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives Don Eberly, chairman and founder, Acting Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services Wade F. Horn, president, and Roland Warren, executive vice president, National Fatherhood Initiative; Josh McDowell, founder, Josh McDowell Ministries; and former Vice President Al Gore.

Remarks Honoring the Super Bowl XXXV Champion Baltimore Ravens
June 7, 2001

Thank you. Please be seated. It seems like we drew quite a crowd here today. It's been a big day here at the White House. I got to sign the most significant tax relief in a generation. [*Applause*] Recycling a few tax families here. [*Laughter*] Then, of course, I get the high honor of welcoming the Super Bowl champs, the Baltimore Ravens.

First, I do want to thank the Members of the United States Congress from the State of Maryland who are here. It seems like they have got a particular interest in this event. Thank you all for coming. Cardinal, thank you for being here, as well. With you on the side of the Ravens, I can now understand why teams like the Cowboys didn't do very well.

Art, welcome, and congratulations. Some of you may know, or don't know, I used to be an owner in the professional leagues. It happened to be in baseball. I never had the thrill of receiving a trophy like you and your family have done. It's a great tribute to good ownership, to win a trophy such as this, and I congratulate you for being here. And I congratulate you for putting together a fine organization. Big Ozzie, congratulations, sir. I'm your age. [*Laughter*] You look younger. [*Laughter*] Anyway—I also want to congratulate the coach. Brian, it's good to see you again. I think the players know this, that you can't win a championship without a good coach, without a good leader. And it's pretty hard to inspire a group of strong-headed, great athletes—[*laughter*]—but you did. I congratulate you.

I want to congratulate all the players who are here. And I want to congratulate your families, too. It's sometimes not easy to be the wife of a football player or a baseball player. There's a lot of time away from the home. And while the players, of course, deserve the great credit for winning on the field, the wives deserve a lot of credit, too, by standing behind the players. So congratulate to the family members.

This is a team that is blessed by five native—having five native Texans on the team. [*Laughter*] Very wise of you. [*Laughter*] So to my fellow Texans, welcome to the White House. It's good to see you. [*Laughter*]

A couple of points I want to make. First, I realize it's been 30 years since the Lombardi Trophy rested in Baltimore, Maryland. It's clear by bringing it back home, Art, that you have indelibly etched your team and your style and the team's culture in the hearts of the people of Baltimore.

I also want to use this opportunity—as you know, I'm going over to Europe, and one of the discussions there in Europe will be about defense—[*laughter*]—Senator Sarbanes. [*Laughter*] I think our Allies need to look at the Baltimore Ravens. [*Laughter*] They'll realize good defense wins. A good defense is one which adjusts to the times. A good defense is modern. A good defense is clear. And if Secretary Rumsfeld gets tired of his job, "Secretary Marvin Lewis" sounds pretty good—[*laughter*]—Secretary of Defense. [*Laughter*]

At any rate, congratulations for winning. I also want to congratulate Michael McCrary. I do because he recently received the NFL Players Association highest honor of humanitary achievement. That's important. It's important to be a champ on the field, and it's important to be a champ off the field. And Michael, I want to thank you for your work with the Special Olympics.

I don't know if any of you have ever had a chance to go to see the Special Olympics, but if you do, and somebody offers you a chance to be a hugger—which means you're standing on the other side

of the finish line to hug somebody who comes running across—do it. It touches your heart. And Michael, thank you for that. And thank you for setting a good example.

Thank you all for coming to the White House. Thanks for being champs. And on behalf of the American people, I congratulate you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:25 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to His Eminence William Cardinal Keeler, Archbishop of Baltimore; and owner Art Modell, vice president of player personnel Ozzie Newsome, head coach Brian Billick, defensive coordinator Marvin Lewis, and player Michael McCrary, Baltimore Ravens.

Remarks at a Tax Relief Celebration in Dallas Center, Iowa
June 8, 2001

Thank you all very much. It's nice to be back on the farm. [*Laughter*] I want to thank the Barretts for their hospitality. I was here before; I'm going to make mention of that in a minute. But it's great to be back here again. Tom and Judy and their family represent what America is all about: family values, family love, hard work, tradition, history, generations. So it's an honor to be back here and be able to talk a little bit about what's going on in the Nation's Capital.

I am so honored to be traveling today with members of the Iowa congressional delegation, at least those who had the wisdom to support tax relief for the hard-working people of Iowa.

The Senator was really effective. I know you were proud of him before this piece of legislation passed, but if you had seen him like I saw him, working hard on behalf of people, you'd really be proud. This is a monumental legislative achievement, because the chairman from the great State of Iowa worked diligently on behalf of the American people. This happened because Chairman Grassley made it happen, and I am so grateful.

As you know, we Bushes are used to taking orders from people named Barbara. [*Laughter*] That's right, it is her birthday. I want you to note, those in the press corps, I called her first thing this morning and wished her a happy birthday.

But Senator Grassley listens to someone named Barbara, as well, and she is with us today, Barbara Grassley. Thank you for coming, Barbara.

Four Congressmen from Iowa stood fast with the people of Iowa. Congressman Ganske—some say he might be thinking down the road. If he is, I hope everybody gives him a serious look, because he was steadfast when it came to worrying about the working people in the State of Iowa and the farmers in the State of Iowa. And you've allowed others from the great State of Iowa to come into the greater Des Moines area: Latham, Leach, and Nussle, fine Congressmen, honest, decent Americans. And by the way, Congressman Jim Nussle was the head of the Budget Committee, who did a superb job, an unbelievably good job of shepherding through a budget that not only helps the Nation meet our priorities but a budget that also included some of the surplus going back to the people that pay the bills. Congressman Nussle distinguished himself on behalf of all Americans and particularly the people of the State of Iowa. So I am so honored that the three—four Congressmen are with us.

You may have heard that I'm on my way from here to chunk out the first pitch at

the College World Series. As you know, it's in Nebraska. I see a man with a Nebraska—there you go, yes—Nebraska hat on. Well, we've got a Congressman from Nebraska, as well, with us, Congressman Lee Terry. I appreciate you coming, Lee, as well; thanks for being here. I haven't decided whether or not I'm going to go with the fastball or slider today. [*Laughter*] I just hope it's not the same pitch I used in Milwaukee to open the stadium, where there was a nice little bounce to it before it got to the plate. [*Laughter*]

At any rate, I'm so honored to be here. Kay, I appreciate you being here. I remember well the speech I gave to the Greater Des Moines Partnership. And I want to thank all the Chamber of Commerce members who are here.

I also want to recognize two former Governors, friends of mine who were steadfast in their support, Bob Ray and Terry Branstad. Thank you both for coming. They still remember you. And I know the speaker of the house is here, as well. Where's Brent? Brent, thanks for coming. It's great to see you, sir. Thank you.

The last time I was here, we were talking about farm policy, and there were two people who were here then that aren't here now. And I'm so sad that Herb Plambeck and Bob Lounsberry are not with us. But I can assure you that they're smiling when they heard that we had gotten rid of the death tax.

I also want to thank the tax families who are here. For those of you who paid attention to the campaign, one of the things I tried to do in the course of the campaign, in order to build public will for good public policy, was to talk about how tax relief would benefit real live families, how tax relief would make a difference in the lives of hard-working Iowa citizens. The Kozol family, the Skiles family, and the Barrett family are here with us. Thank you all so very much for coming. Thanks for letting me use you as live examples. You should take special pride in knowing that your hard work, along with the hard work of millions of others, convinced the United States Congress to do the right thing. Tax relief is real, and tax relief is on the way.

Somebody said, "Well, why are you going back to the farm to talk about the joint accomplishment that happened in Washington?" Well, it's the place where I made the promise.

It was here that I talked about the agricultural policy that I felt was good for the Nation. It was here where I, amongst other things, said two things loud and clear: One, my administration will support ethanol, not only during the campaign but afterwards. We believe in value-added processing. I haven't changed my mind since I got elected. I still strongly believe that ethanol is important not only to reduce dependency upon foreign sources of energy but also as a source and a way to clean the air.

And secondly, I said, if given a chance to be the President, I would do everything I could to get rid of the death tax. The bill I signed yesterday gets rid of the death tax over time. The bill I signed yesterday recognizes that, when you tax a person's assets twice, it's unfair. The bill we worked on and I signed recognized the importance of the family farmer in America.

I heard somebody say, "Well, you know, the death tax doesn't cause people to sell their farms." I don't know who they're talking to in Iowa. I've talked to people who were forced to sell their farms in order to pay for the death tax.

But I'll tell you what else the death tax used to do. It used to cause generation after generation to bear debt, to live under the heavy onus of having to borrow money to pay their taxes. Now, in some cases, they may not have transferred the assets out of the family, but in many cases the death tax caused one generation after another to try to climb out from underneath heavy debt, and those days are ended, as far as we're concerned, in America.

And then I went over—that was September 1st, '99. And to complete the circle,

I went—and December 1st—Kay mentioned—and talked about tax relief beyond just the death tax. I laid out some principles. I said, first and foremost, I believe our Government can afford tax relief. Then the economy turned a little south on us, and I began to say, not only can we afford it, we cannot afford not to have it. It's important for us to have made a case, and I think people listened, that tax relief will provide a second wind to our economy. I said that a principle that needed to be—this needs to be a tax cut that was fair.

We said in the course of the campaign—the chairman embraced the idea—that if you pay taxes, you get tax relief; that instead of having this business about Washington, DC, targeting people in or targeting people out, we didn't think that was fair. We said, everybody who pays—the only fair way to deal with tax relief is to reduce all rates on all taxpayers, so that Washington doesn't pick and choose winners and losers. And that's what this bill did.

It said, we're going to be fair about tax relief. And as the Senator mentioned, this is the first reduction in all rates in 20 years—as a matter of fact, since World War II, it has only happened twice: President Kennedy had the honor of signing the tax relief plan; President Ronald Reagan had the honor of signing an overhaul of the Tax Code and overall tax relief plan. And now President George W. Bush has that honor, and I'm in distinguished company, I might add.

We also said in the campaign that it was important to make the code respond to people who make good choices. A good choice is being married. [*Laughter*] And we did something about the marriage penalty in the Tax Code. We say, if you're struggling hard to get ahead, that we ought to—and you're raising kids, we recognize that in tax relief. And so part of the tax relief package has raised the child credit from $500 to $1,000 per child. And we also said in this bill, which I supported and I know the chairman supported, that there is some who may not have qualified for the tax credit in the past, that we ought to have a refundable tax credit for the poor citizens in our society. And that's a part of the bill, as well.

This tax legislation is good for the country. It's good for the economy. And as importantly, it embodies a principle that is embedded in my political soul. And it says that our Government, at all times, ought to trust the people—that we ought to trust the people of this country. It says, once we meet our priorities, that we ought to trust the people with the surplus. After all, it's the people's money; it's not the Government's money. I would much rather have the tax families making the decisions with their own money than the Federal Government deciding what's best for American families.

No, the core principle of this tax relief plan says, we trust people. We trust the American people. And all of us in public office should, because the American people are the finest people on the face of the Earth.

This tax relief plan is also important because it's the beginning of the change of the tone in Washington, DC. You know, a lot of us that weren't in Washington in the past and used to look up there and weren't really pleased with the bickering that was going on and the name calling and the unnecessary shrillness that were echoing through the Halls of the Capitol. There is still some of that. Sometimes I catch some of those elected officials, maybe not saying things about me that my mother would like to hear. [*Laughter*] But the tone is changing. It is. We're working hard to change it.

The chairman worked hard with his counterpart, with the Democrat in a western State, to get this bill done. Tax relief is important for the economy. Tax relief is really important for the American people. Tax relief is going to be evident pretty quickly, by the way, when married couples

start getting a $600 check this summer; single head of the household, $500 check; single folks, a $300 check—followed by reduction in rates.

But tax relief also shows what can happen with the right spirit and right attitude in our Nation's Capital. It shows the American people that if you set aside partisanship and focus on good public policy, we can accomplish things on behalf of the American people, instead of kind of worrying about your own standing or focusing on a focus group, taking a poll to figure out what to believe in. If you put the interest of the American people ahead of self-interest or political interest, we can get positive things done in the Nation's Capital. This is the beginning of a lot of reform that's going to take place.

And I'm excited about what's coming down the pike. We're fixing to get a good education bill out—I hope the Senate moves it quickly—one that sets high standards, trusts local people to make the decisions for their children; one that embodies an Iowa concept of accountability, right in the core of the education bill.

I'm excited about the progress we're making as far as our military. I said, loud and clear, when I came to Iowa, it's important for our military to be of high standing, high morale. The first thing we're going to do is pay our troops more money and make sure they're better housed.

I'm going to Europe and looking forward to my trip, going to Europe. But I cannot wait to describe to the people of Europe, the leaders in Europe, how important it is for freedom-loving people to think differently about how to keep peace. Now, Russia is not our enemy. Russia is no longer our enemy, and therefore we shouldn't be locked into a cold war mentality that says we keep the peace by blowing each other up. In my attitude, that's old; that's tired; that's stale.

Our United States and our allies ought to develop the capacity to address the true threats of the 21st century. The true threats are biological and informational warfare. The true threats are the fact that some rogue nations who can't stand America or our allies or our freedoms or our successes would try to point a missile at us. And we must have the capacity to shoot that missile down. It's time to think differently about defense.

We're making progress. We're not only making progress in changing the tone, we're making progress at convincing people that some issues require a different way of thinking.

I'm so excited to be the President. It is an incredible honor, because we also have a chance to work together to change our Nation's culture, to usher in a period of personal responsibility, to say loud and clear to citizens who need help,"Somebody loves you."

You see, Government can spend money, and we will. Our budgets reflect the compassion of America. But compassion isn't measured in dollars and cents. Compassion is measured in acts of kindness, in decency. One of the most important initiatives we're working on is what I call a Faith-Based and Community Initiative. It says, in order to make sure people aren't left behind, not only do children need to be educated, but our Nation must rally mentors to say to children whose parents may be in prison, "I care for you. I want to provide you with hope."

Or that we've got to understand—I'll never forget going to Colfax, Iowa, to understand that sometimes in order to get a person off alcohol or drugs, the most effective way is to change the person's heart.

Government can't cause people to love one another. But what Government and leaders can do is gather up the great compassion of America, encourage faith-based programs to flourish, welcome community-based programs in neighborhoods, all aimed at making sure no citizen in this land is left behind.

And I believe we're on our way. I believe we're on our way to a much better America. We're great; we can be even greater. And it begins by understanding where the strength of this country is. The strength of this country is in the hearts and souls of loving, decent, honorable citizens.

My job is to call upon the best, and it's my honor to do so. It also starts with understanding the awesome responsibilities of the collective offices we hold. I'll never forget that I hold the highest office of the land and with it comes an awesome responsibility. And I accept it gladly, and I'm not going to let you down.

Thanks for coming. Thanks for having me back. I'm honored to have your hospitality. God bless you all, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:20 a.m. at the Barrett Farm. In his remarks, he referred to his mother, Barbara Bush; farm co-owners Tom and Judy Barrett; Barbara Grassley, wife of Senator Charles E. Grassley; Kay King, president and founder, Travel World; and Speaker of the House Brent Siegrist, Iowa General Assembly.

Statement on the Trade Agreement With Vietnam
June 8, 2001

Free trade and open markets are at the foundation of my administration's efforts to promote prosperity and opportunity around the world. Our free trade agenda is designed to engage our trading partners at the global, regional, and bilateral level and to expand economic integration and political cooperation. The history of the previous century teaches us that trade is a powerful tool for improving and reforming economies and opening up entire societies.

Today I am sending to the Congress the Vietnam bilateral trade agreement, an important part of my administration's trade agenda. This agreement will increase opportunities for U.S. firms by requiring Vietnam to dismantle a wide range of trade barriers, open its services markets, and provide comprehensive protection of intellectual property rights. Expanding ties between the United States and Vietnam will continue the historic process of normalizing our relations—a process that began during the first Bush administration and advanced in the Clinton administration with the negotiation of this agreement.

This agreement enjoys broad bipartisan support in the Congress, including from many Members who are Vietnam veterans. Enactment of the agreement will provide a solid bipartisan foundation for action on other trade issues.

I recently extended the Jackson-Vanik waiver for Vietnam for one year, based on my belief that Vietnam is making progress on liberalizing its emigration statutes. My administration will continue to press for improvements in Vietnam's overall record on human rights and religious freedom.

At the dawn of a new millennium, the United States stands ready to shoulder its leadership role throughout the world. Engaging other nations in trade is a vital part of U.S. leadership, and it is a key element of promoting economic growth at home and abroad. I urge the Congress to approve this agreement.

NOTE: The related memorandums of June 1 and June 8 and the proclamation of June 8 are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message to the Congress on Trade With Vietnam
June 8, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with section 407 of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (19 U.S.C. 2434) (the "Trade Act"), I am transmitting a copy of a proclamation that extends nondiscriminatory tariff treatment to the products of Vietnam. As an annex to the proclamation, I also enclose the text of the "Agreement Between the United States of America and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam on Trade Relations," which was signed on July 13, 2000, including related annexes and exchanges of letters.

Implementation of this Agreement will strengthen political relations between the United States and Vietnam and produce economic benefits for both countries. It will also help to reinforce political and economic reform in Vietnam.

I believe that the Agreement is consistent with both the letter and spirit of the Trade Act. The Agreement provides for mutual extension of nondiscriminatory tariff treatment, while seeking to ensure overall reciprocity of economic benefits. The Agreement includes safeguard arrangements designed to ensure that imports from Vietnam will not disrupt the U.S. market.

The Agreement also facilitates and expands the rights that U.S. businesses will have in conducting commercial transactions both within Vietnam and with Vietnamese nationals and business entities, and includes provisions dealing with settlement of commercial disputes, investment, financial transactions, and the establishment of government commercial offices. Vietnam also agrees to adopt standards for intellectual property protection that match the standards set forth in the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights.

On June 1, 2001, I waived application of subsections 402 (a) and (b) of the Trade Act with respect to Vietnam. I urge that Congress act as soon as possible to approve, by a joint resolution referred to in section 151 (b) (3) of the Trade Act, the extension of nondiscriminatory treatment to the products of Vietnam as provided for in the Agreement.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
June 8, 2001.

NOTE: The related memorandums of June 1 and June 8 and the proclamation of June 8 are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

The President's Radio Address
June 9, 2001

Good morning. This week I marked National Homeownership Week by volunteering with a local Habitat for Humanity work crew in Tampa, Florida. I was privileged to work with local volunteers to help build a home for Johana Rodriguez and her family. Like all Habitat families, Ms. Rodriguez contributed her own hard work to her home's construction. And she takes great pride in the fact that she'll soon fulfill the American Dream of being a homeowner.

More Americans than ever before are experiencing that dream. But it still eludes too many people. For instance, while the

rate of homeownership amongst all Americans is nearly 68 percent, the rate among African American and Hispanic families is under 50 percent. These numbers are troubling, because homeownership lies at the heart of the American Dream. It is a key to upward mobility for low- and middle-income Americans. It is an anchor for families and a source of stability for communities. It serves as the foundation of many people's financial security, and it is a source of pride for people who have worked hard to provide for their families. We need to do more to promote homeownership in America. And my administration is proposing a number of ways to do just that.

Our 2002 budget dedicates more than $30 billion to the Department of Housing and Urban Development. This is an increase of almost $2 billion over current funding levels. We are working in a variety of ways to build and sustain neighborhoods in inner cities and rural communities across America.

One particular program, the American Dream Downpayment Fund, will provide $200 million in downpayment assistance to help 130,000 low-income families buy homes. In addition, my administration announced earlier this week a program to allow people who receive low-income rental assistance to bundle a year's worth of payments and use the money for a downpayment or to make monthly payments on a new mortgage.

We're also proposing a $1.7 billion tax credit to support the rehabilitation or new construction of up to 100,000 homes over a 5-year period. And this week I was proud to sign a bipartisan tax relief bill that will let Americans keep more of their hard-earned money, money they can use to help purchase a new home or pay the mortgage of an existing home.

Government can play a helpful role, but so must many others. My administration is dedicated to helping the private sector organizations, like Habitat for Humanity, that build homes and lift lives. HUD's Self-Help Ownership Opportunity Program provides seed money to groups like Habitat to purchase land for homes and build streets and utilities in local neighborhoods. Next year's budget will propose tripling the program's funds to expand its reach.

If you have an opportunity to help Habitat for Humanity or other organizations working to make the American Dream a reality for more families, I hope you do so. Government funding can help, but Habitat relies on volunteers to accomplish the bulk of its mission. And I can tell you from personal experience, there's no better way to feel like you're making a difference than to put hammer to nail and help people realize their dreams.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 2:10 p.m. on June 7 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on June 9. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 8 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks on the Execution of Timothy McVeigh
June 11, 2001

This morning the United States of America carried out the severest sentence for the gravest of crimes. The victims of the Oklahoma City bombing have been given not vengeance but justice. And one young

man met the fate he chose for himself 6 years ago.

For the survivors of the crime and for the families of the dead, the pain goes on. Final punishment of the guilty cannot alone bring peace to the innocent. It cannot recover the loss or balance the scales, and it is not meant to do so. Today every living person who was hurt by the evil done in Oklahoma City can rest in the knowledge that there has been a reckoning.

At every point, from the morning of April 19, 1995, to this hour, we have seen the good that overcomes evil. We saw it in the rescuers who saved and suffered with the victims. We have seen it in a community that has grieved and held close the memory of the lost. We have seen it in the work of detectives, marshal, and police; and we've seen it in the courts. Due process ruled: The case was proved; the verdict was calmly reached; and the rights of the accused were protected and observed to the full and to the end. Under the laws of our country, the matter is concluded.

Life and history bring tragedies, and often they cannot be explained. But they can be redeemed. They are redeemed by dispensing justice, though eternal justice is not ours to deliver; by remembering those who grieve, including Timothy McVeigh's mother, father, and sisters; and by trusting in purposes greater than our own.

May God in his mercy grant peace to all—to the lives that were taken 6 years ago, to the lives that go on, and to the life that ended today.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:44 a.m. in the James S. Brady Briefing Room at the White House. Timothy McVeigh was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to death for the murder of 168 people in the April 19, 1995, bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, OK.

Remarks on Global Climate Change
June 11, 2001

Good morning. I've just met with senior members of my administration who are working to develop an effective and science-based approach to addressing the important issues of global climate change.

This is an issue that I know is very important to the nations of Europe, which I will be visiting for the first time as President. The Earth's well-being is also an issue important to America, and it's an issue that should be important to every nation in every part of our world.

The issue of climate change respects no border. Its effects cannot be reined in by an army nor advanced by any ideology. Climate change, with its potential to impact every corner of the world, is an issue that must be addressed by the world.

The Kyoto Protocol was fatally flawed in fundamental ways, but the process used to bring nations together to discuss our joint response to climate change is an important one. That is why I am today committing the United States of America to work within the United Nations framework and elsewhere to develop, with our friends and allies and nations throughout the world, an effective and science-based response to the issue of global warming.

My Cabinet-level working group has met regularly for the last 10 weeks to review the most recent, most accurate, and most comprehensive science. They have heard from scientists offering a wide spectrum of views. They have reviewed the facts, and they have listened to many theories and suppositions. The working group asked the

highly respected National Academy of Sciences to provide us the most up-to-date information about what is known and about what is not known on the science of climate change.

First, we know the surface temperature of the Earth is warming. It has risen by .6 degrees Celsius over the past 100 years. There was a warming trend from the 1890s to the 1940s, cooling from the 1940s to the 1970s, and then sharply rising temperatures from the 1970s to today.

There is a natural greenhouse effect that contributes to warming. Greenhouse gases trap heat and thus warm the Earth because they prevent a significant proportion of infrared radiation from escaping into space. Concentration of greenhouse gases, especially CO_2, have increased substantially since the beginning of the industrial revolution. And the National Academy of Sciences indicates that the increase is due in large part to human activity.

Yet, the Academy's report tells us that we do not know how much effect natural fluctuations in climate may have had on warming. We do not know how much our climate could or will change in the future. We do not know how fast change will occur or even how some of our actions could impact it. For example, our useful efforts to reduce sulfur emissions may have actually increased warming because sulfate particles reflect sunlight, bouncing it back into space. And finally, no one can say with any certainty what constitutes a dangerous level of warming and, therefore, what level must be avoided.

The policy challenge is to act in a serious and sensible way, given the limits of our knowledge. While scientific uncertainties remain, we can begin now to address the factors that contribute to climate change.

There are only two ways to stabilize concentration of greenhouse gases: One is to avoid emitting them in the first place; the other is to try to capture them after they're created. And there are problems with both approaches. We're making great progress through technology but have not yet developed cost-effective ways to capture carbon emissions at their source, although there is some promising work that is being done.

And a growing population requires more energy to heat and cool our homes, more gas to drive our cars. Even though we're making progress on conservation and energy efficiency and have significantly reduced the amount of carbon emissions per unit of GDP, our country, the United States, is the world's largest emitter of manmade greenhouse gases. We account for almost 20 percent of the world's manmade greenhouse emissions. We also account for about one-quarter of the world's economic output.

We recognize the responsibility to reduce our emissions. We also recognize the other part of the story, that the rest of the world emits 80 percent of all greenhouse gases, and many of those emissions come from developing countries.

This is a challenge that requires a 100 percent effort, ours and the rest of the world's. The world's second largest emitter of greenhouse gases is China, yet China was entirely exempted from the requirements of the Kyoto Protocol. India and Germany are among the top emitters, yet India was also exempt from Kyoto. These and other developing countries that are experiencing rapid growth face challenges in reducing their emissions without harming their economies. We want to work cooperatively with these countries in their efforts to reduce greenhouse emissions and maintain economic growth.

Kyoto also failed to address two major pollutants that have an impact on warming, black soot and tropospheric ozone. Both are proven health hazards. Reducing both would not only address climate change but also dramatically improve people's health.

Kyoto is, in many ways, unrealistic. Many countries cannot meet their Kyoto targets. The targets themselves were arbitrary and not based upon science. For America, complying with those mandates would have a

negative economic impact, with layoffs of workers and price increases for consumers. And when you evaluate all these flaws, most reasonable people will understand that it's not sound public policy. That's why 95 Members of the United States Senate expressed a reluctance to endorse such an approach.

Yet, America's unwillingness to embrace a flawed treaty should not be read by our friends and allies as any abdication of responsibility. To the contrary, my administration is committed to a leadership role on the issue of climate change. We recognize our responsibility and will meet it—at home, in our hemisphere, and in the world.

My Cabinet-level working group on climate change is recommending a number of initial steps and will continue to work on additional ideas. The working group proposes the United States help lead the way by advancing the science on climate change, advancing the technology to monitor and reduce greenhouse gases, and creating partnerships within our hemisphere and beyond to monitor and measure and mitigate emissions.

I also call on Congress to work with my administration to achieve the significant emission reductions made possible by implementing the clean energy technologies proposed in our energy plan.

Our working group study has made it clear that we need to know a lot more. The U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change commits us to stabilizing concentrations at a level that will prevent dangerous human interference with the climate, but no one knows what that level is. The United States has spent $18 billion on climate research since 1990, 3 times as much as any other country and more than Japan and all 15 nations of the EU combined.

Today I make our investment in science even greater. My administration will establish the U.S. Climate Change Research Initiative to study areas of uncertainty and identify priority areas where investments can make a difference. I'm directing my Secretary of Commerce, working with other agencies, to set priorities for additional investments in climate change research, review such investments, and to improve coordination amongst Federal agencies. We will fully fund high-priority areas for climate change science over the next 5 years. We'll also provide resources to build climate observation systems in developing countries and encourage other developed nations to match our American commitment. And we propose a joint venture with the EU, Japan, and others to develop state-of-the-art climate modeling that will help us better understand the causes and impacts of climate change.

America's the leader in technology and innovation. We all believe technology offers great promise to significantly reduce emissions, especially carbon capture, storage, and sequestration technologies. So we're creating the National Climate Change Technology Initiative to strengthen research at universities and national labs, to enhance partnerships in applied research, to develop improved technology for measuring and monitoring gross and net greenhouse gas emissions, and to fund demonstration projects for cutting-edge technologies, such as bioreactors and fuel cells.

Even with the best science, even with the best technology, we all know the United States cannot solve this global problem alone. We're building partnerships within the Western Hemisphere and with other like-minded countries. Last week Secretary Powell signed a new CONCAUSA Declaration with the countries of Central America, calling for cooperative efforts on science research, monitoring and measuring of emissions, technology development, and investment in forest conservation. We will work with the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research and other institutions to better understand regional impacts of climate change. We will establish a partnership to monitor and mitigate emissions.

And at home, I call on Congress to work with my administration on the initiatives to enhance conservation and energy efficiency outlined in my energy plan, to implement the increased use of renewables, natural gas, and hydropower that are outlined in the plan, and to increase the generation of safe and clean nuclear power. By increasing conservation and energy efficiency and aggressively using these clean energy technologies, we can reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by significant amounts in the coming years.

We can make great progress in reducing emissions, and we will. Yet, even that isn't enough. I've asked my advisers to consider approaches to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including those that tap the power of markets, help realize the promise of technology, and ensure the widest possible global participation.

As we analyze the possibilities, we will be guided by several basic principles. Our approach must be consistent with the long-term goal of stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere. Our actions should be measured as we learn more from science and build on it. Our approach must be flexible to adjust to new information and take advantage of new technology. We must always act to ensure continued economic growth and prosperity for our citizens and for citizens throughout the world. We should pursue market-based incentives and spur technological innovation. And finally, our approach must be based on global participation, including that of developing countries whose net greenhouse gas emissions now exceed those in the developed countries. I've asked Secretary Powell and Administrator Whitman to ensure they actively work with friends and allies to explore common approaches to climate change consistent with these principles.

Each step we take will increase our knowledge. We will act, learn, and act again, adjusting our approaches as science advances and technology evolves. Our administration will be creative. We're committed to protecting our environment and improving our economy, to acting at home and working in concert with the world. This is an administration that will make commitments we can keep and keep the commitments that we make.

I look forward to continued discussions with our friends and allies about this important issue.

Thank you for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:10 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Russia
June 11, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication. This notice states that the emergency declared with respect to the accumulation of a large volume of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation is to continue beyond June 21, 2001.

It remains a major national security goal of the United States to ensure that fissile material removed from Russian nuclear

weapons pursuant to various arms control and disarmament agreements is dedicated to peaceful uses, subject to transparency measures, and protected from diversion to activities of proliferation concern. The accumulation of a large volume of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force these emergency authorities beyond June 21, 2001.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
June 11, 2001.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 12.

The President's News Conference With President Jose Maria Aznar of Spain in Madrid, Spain
June 12, 2001

President Aznar. It's a great pleasure to be able to welcome the President of the United States of America, George Bush, to *Palacio de la Moncloa* on his first visit to Spain. I'd like to express my satisfaction with regard to the atmosphere of cordiality and the friendship that has ruled in our meetings today, our working luncheon, and our talks. And I also want to thank his advisers and his staff for all the kindness and all of the interest they have shown in issues that matter to Spain.

As all of you know, President Bush and his delegation spent several hours with us in *Quintos de Mora en Toledo,* where we had the opportunity to talk about a number of issues I will refer to.

As you know, the United States of America and Spain share a common history—before, during, and after its independence—to which Spain has made a major contribution. At present, many U.S. citizens have Spanish as their mother tongue—a number which in the next few years will be more than that of Spaniards—and a language which we hear the President himself speaking better and better every day. [*Laughter*] Our students and our researchers chose many university centers in the United States as the place of preference to study and work. And I, myself, have been able to find, on my trips to the United States, how quickly Spanish scientists are included in these research centers and institutions.

We share with the United States confidence in the values of freedom, democracy, and respect for human rights, which we believe are basic values, not simply to live within our own countries but also as a model of behavior for the entire international community. We are open societies; we are firm defenders of market economies; and we are convinced of the importance of these shared and common values, such as the family in our countries.

These same values that we share and defend have led both our countries to take part in the same security organizations, and we defend the transatlantic dialog which has been the basis for peace and stability in the last half century.

As you know, President Bush and I will be attending the meeting of heads of state and government of NATO tomorrow. And on Thursday will be the U.S.-EU Summit, which will be followed by a dinner with the 15 heads of state and government, along with President Bush.

As I said earlier, there are many issues that we discussed, and I would very briefly like to refer to these. On the bilateral front, we talked about the implementation of the political joint statement that was signed last January. We are negotiating, as you all know, a review of the agreement for defense cooperation that we hope can be signed as soon as possible. We have discussed several issues with regard to our economic, industrial, cultural, and security cooperation.

On the international front, as was included in the joint statement that President Bush and I just signed and which has been given to you, we dealt with the development of our transatlantic economic relationship, the development of European defense, the Balkan situation, the Middle East conflict, and the need to increase and improve our cooperation with the developing world.

Allow me to indicate that because of our historical and political realities and our cultural realities, we have especially discussed the issue of Ibero-America, a region whose welfare and development is something that Spain and the United States are keenly interested in. I'd like to underscore the extreme sensitivity of President Bush with regard to Ibero-American issues, as was evidenced by the various initiatives he has implemented since becoming President of the United States, and which I, myself, have been able to see during our discussions today.

Before you ask any questions, I would like to say that as is the case on many issues that we have dealt with, we have not always been in agreement. But that, precisely, is always the case at meetings like these. We try to agree; we try to find meeting points on those issues where interpretations perhaps are not always the same. For that reason, we have established regular contexts in our joint political declaration, and we have approved—and I am very grateful to President Bush for his kind invitation to visit the United States before the Spanish Presidency, in other words, before the end of this year.

My conclusion is that these discussions will promote and enhance the U.S.-Spain relationship even more, which will lead to great progress—promising progress, new contacts, new agreements, new opportunities, and new common objectives.

Thank you very much, and I give the floor to the President.

President Bush. Well, thank you, Mr. President. It's such an honor to be here. It is an appropriate place for me to begin my visit to Europe. Spain is a friend of the United States, and President Aznar is a friend of mine. *Es un enorme placer estar en España, cuya gran cultura ha marcado profundamente mi pais.*

Spain is one of America's most reliable Allies and one of the world's most dynamic societies. Spain has made one of Europe's most remarkable transitions to democracy and prosperity. It is now the world's eighth largest industrial economy. Mr. President, you deserve a lot of credit.

Spain has prospered. It has found a new global role. Hundreds of millions of people now speak the language of Cervantes, and many millions of them live in the United States. We Americans, too, are now proud inheritors of *Hispanidad.*

President Aznar and I have today reconfirmed the close relationship between the United States and Spain. Our joint statement expresses a renewed commitment to the NATO Alliance and a readiness to respond to any new threats. The statement also underscores our shared support for a new round of global trade negotiations this year.

The United States and Spain have worked closely together to promote freedom, prosperity, and stability, both in the Americas and in Southeast Europe. We appreciate Spain's contributions to peace in the Balkans and Spain's hospitable welcome to the American soldiers, sailors, marines, and aircrews on the bases here.

It is important that we continue this excellent record of military cooperation. It is also important that we continue to cooperate in the Middle East and that we combine our efforts to fight terrorism—terrorism around the world. And our Government is committed to stand side by side with the Spanish Government as it battles terrorism here in Spain.

I shared with President Aznar my administration's desire to work with our European partners to build a Europe that is whole, free, peaceful, and linked in solidarity with the United States. This week I'll be meeting with two great institutions of Europe, NATO and the European Union, to affirm our common purposes and to chart our path ahead of us.

Europe has often had a history of division and conflict, but Europe today is writing a new story, a story of democratic progress, economic reform, and ethnic tolerance. This commitment to a united, prosperous, peaceful Europe is an American commitment, as well. America benefits when Europe is united and peaceful and prosperous.

The hope of progress has never been greater, and America will do all it can to fulfill that promise. We must work together to prevent or resolve regional conflicts, to eliminate barriers to free trade, to extend Europe's zone of peace and stability by enlarging the great institutions of European unity, and to strengthen our ability to meet new challenges to our security.

I look forward to meeting with Russian President Putin to set out a new and constructive and realistic relationship between Russia and the United States. I'm looking forward to talking to President Putin, to assure him of our friendship and to offer him a strong, normal relationship with America.

President Aznar and I have discussed all these issues. And I gained much from his views and experience. I look forward to seeing all my European friends and Allies in the coming days. Europe and the United States are united by a single set of fundamental values, and with that unity, there is much we can accomplish.

Mr. President, thank you, sir.

Q. Mr. President——

President Bush. Speak clearly.

Q. I'll try, sir. It's one of those things I have problems with.

President Bush. Speak for yourself. [*Laughter*]

Q. I was.

President Bush. That's right. [*Laughter*]

Global Warming/National Missile Defense

Q. Mr. President, the EU today rejected your global warming initiative, Mr. President, and weeks of consultations have not eased the objections to your missile defense plans in most European capitals. I have two questions on that: Are these issues so important that you're willing to go it alone if the European Allies won't come on board? And what is your response to the EU today calling your climate change plan short on results?

President Bush. Well, first, there's a lot that unite us: trade, common values, great opportunities. I look forward to making my case, as I did today over lunch, about missile defense. It starts with explaining to Russia and our European friends and allies that Russia is not the enemy of the United States, that the attitude of mutually assured destruction is a relic of the cold war, and that we must address the new threats of the 21st century if we're to have a peaceful continent and a peaceful world. Those new threats are terrorism, based upon the capacity of some countries to develop weapons of mass destruction and, therefore, hold the United States and our friends hostage. It is so important we think differently in order to address those threats.

I believe that people are interested in our opinion. I believe Mr. Putin is interested in our opinions. I know the President of Spain was willing to listen as to why it's important to think differently in order

to keep the peace. The ABM Treaty prevents our Nation and other freedom-loving nations from exploring opportunities to be able to say to those who would hold freedom-loving peoples hostage that we're not going to let you do so. So I look forward to consulting and continue the consultations that have already begun.

As far as global warming, I made a strong statement yesterday that said our Nation is concerned about CO_2 emissions and that we've begun the process to address that problem. I started with an energy plan that, on the one hand, talks about conservation measures. Our country can and will do a better job of conserving energy. But I also talked about new supplies that will not harm the environment: renewables, natural gas, and clean nuclear energy. And I hope the United States Congress responds positively to these measures, which will help in the global warming issue.

I also said our Nation is willing to continue to spend money on science, to make sure that any collective approach is one based upon sound science. I did speak out against the Kyoto treaty itself, because I felt that the Kyoto treaty was unrealistic, it was not based upon science. The stated mandates in the Kyoto treaty would affect our economy in a negative way.

On the other hand, I did say loud and clear that we must continue the process of dialog. I instructed people in our administration to adhere to the United Nations framework to figure out ways for us to come together to address this issue that knows no borders or no boundaries. I'm confident the people of—the leadership of Europe are interested in our opinions, and I'm confident we'll have a good and constructive dialog.

President Aznar. I'd like to express my own opinion on these two issues, because I want to tell you I've followed our conversations very carefully, and I want to thank President Bush for the initiatives he's taken on in explaining this missile defense program and all of the explanations and information he has been kind enough to provide me this afternoon.

I want to say that, according to my opinion, it's absolutely understandable for any President to be concerned about the security of his citizens. And in this particular case, obviously there is a concern that's shared as a result of the collective security that we share.

I sincerely believe that no one should be surprised that when we pose issues based on overcoming the past of the cold war, policies going beyond the cold war, presentations that go beyond the historical conflict of the cold war, and we talk about new threats, new challenges, new problems, new challenges in general, again, in security, we come to new initiatives. So far, these initiatives have all been virtual in the sense that they were based on an offensive deterrent factor. Now, we have an initiative that is based on defensive issues. It has not been demonstrated anywhere, nor has anyone been able to show that that defensive initiative is something that cannot lead to greater and better security.

For that reason, it is very important for President Bush to have decided to share that initiative with his Allies, to discuss it with them, to establish a framework of cooperation with his Allies with regard to this initiative, and as he announced, to also establish a framework of discussions, cooperation, and a new relationship with Russia.

What I'm surprised by is the fact that there are people who, from the start, disqualified this initiative. And that way, they're also disqualifying the deterrence that has existed so far, and probably they would also disqualify any other kind of initiative. But what we're dealing with here is an attempt to provide greater security for everyone. And from that point of view, that initiative, to share and discuss and dialog and reach common ground with the President of the United States, is something that I greatly appreciate.

With regard to the second issue, on the environment, as you know, Spain continues

to support the position of the EU, and it has ratified the Kyoto Protocol. I understand that we have positions that may have some differences, but I am also absolutely convinced that our objectives—which are to guarantee a climate that will make life possible for everyone, to reduce emissions that can pollute our planet—is an objective that we share.

We can and we must discuss the instruments to achieve those objectives, and I hope that that dialog over the next few days will be even more intense. President Bush has adopted some initiatives, and those initiatives need to be studied by the EU. And they will also be studied by Spain—I insist—from the position that we have had of ratifying the Kyoto Protocol.

Cuba/Plan Colombia

Q. I'd like to tell you both something about Ibero-America, and I'd like to discuss the issue of Ibero-America with you. I want to know if you've adopted any kind of common position. And specifically, with regard to President Bush, two questions on that issue: With regard to Cuba, do you plan to keep the embargo—to continue with the situation that you have with regard to Europe and other countries there; and if, with regard to Plan Colombia, you plan to continue the situation? With regard to the first question, it had to do with Helms-Burton, excuse me.

Thank you very much for respecting the request to only ask one question at a time.

President Bush. Which one, Helms-Burton or Plan Colombia? [*Laughter*] *Los dos.* We plan to keep the embargo on Cuba and will do so until Fidel Castro frees prisoners, has free elections, embraces freedom. I believe strongly that's the right policy for the United States.

As to Helms-Burton, I'm fully aware there's an issue that has arisen between a Spanish corporation and the—and one of the titles of the Helms-Burton bill. And we will work to resolve that dispute.

President Aznar. We had very long discussions on the issue of Ibero-America, and I said earlier that I greatly appreciate President Bush's sensitivities with regard to his—sensitivity with regard to Ibero-America. And obviously, his sensitivity is demonstrated in a very intense way. We had the opportunity to exchange ideas, especially with regard to the issues that are now affecting the possible development of any possibilities in Ibero-America.

But we do agree on something very basic. In Ibero-America, Central America, South America, we see the circumstances there which are sufficient to decisively attract to that part of the world elements of prosperity in the 21st century with greater and better opportunities and, of course, to establish and trust democratic systems that are more and more solid, although there are some exceptions, and to strongly attract these countries towards prosperity, so that there will be more wealth, more welfare there for everyone. That will be very important for us, and it will also be important, I'm sure, for the stability and prosperity of the world at large.

And in that, the United States and Spain share and have a common balance. We are capable of working jointly on delicate issues, such as Plan Colombia, and on some issues, such as the law that you refer to. Although we are not in agreement with it, we are also working so that our relationship will not be damaged and so whatever problems are posed can be dealt with positively or that they do not even arise at all.

Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change

Q. Mr. President, your Chief of Staff said over the weekend that your decision to withdraw from the Kyoto Protocol was based more on emotion than on—was based more on emotion than on science and that you thought that some European countries were playing a little bit of a game because, unlike Spain, they did not ratify the treaty. Do you agree that the European view on this is colored more by emotion

than by science, and do you think that there was some posturing—[*inaudible*]?

President Bush. This is an appropriate question after I've had a chance to visit with all the leaders in Europe. I come to the conference believing that every leader is sincere about their desire to clean the world, and so are we. We have a different approach, but we have the same goals.

As I said earlier, I believe the Kyoto treaty is a flawed treaty. I think that it set unscientific goals. It didn't include developing countries. On the other hand, I want to reiterate today, and I will do so throughout the week, that we're committed to reducing greenhouse gases in the United States.

I had a opportunity to explain to the President that our Nation faces an energy crisis, and it's a serious issue. We've got incredible trading opportunities between our nations and between the United States and the EU. In order for us to be active traders, our Nation's economy must recover. We've taken some steps toward that: We've got sound monetary policy by the Federal Reserve. We've got a new fiscal stimulus package that is going to take effect soon. But we also must address energy. And we can do so in a way that not only enhances our economy, a way that makes us less dependent on foreign sources of crude oil, and a way, as well, that helps clean the environment.

One of my jobs in the United States is to build a consensus around more exploration and transportation of natural gas, which is a clean fuel, more use of renewables, as well as following up on the debate that we have stimulated, which is the use of clean nuclear power. Mr. President was anxious to hear about our plans for economic recovery because it affects trade. And trade is one of the most hopeful opportunities for people around the globe.

President Aznar. All matters related to the development of economic freedom is something that we have shared freely, as you will see in our joint statement.

With regards to the second part of your question, I'm absolutely convinced that the discussions the heads of state and government hold in the European Union with President Bush will be held in a constructive and positive atmosphere, trying to share objectives and share instruments, even though perhaps we start from basic differing opinions because I insist the European Union has been favorable to the Kyoto Protocol, unlike the United States. But we need to continue talking among ourselves to make sure that the objectives that we do share in the end, a cleaner world in which we can live better, are objectives that we all make possible.

Terrorism

Q. The same question for both of you, but I will pose it in a different way. I'd like to ask President Bush: How will this commitment that you have taken on to help Spain in the fight against terrorism be translated? What can the United States do? How can the United States provide any assistance, bearing in mind that in Spain we cannot apply—our ethical principles do not allow us to apply the solution that you apply, the death penalty, for terrorists?

And for Mr. Aznar, the same question. I wanted to ask what you have asked of Mr. Bush, and what do you expect of the United States to help them to solve the most serious problem your government has?

President Aznar. Since it's our most serious problem, if you'll allow me, I'll answer first. I want to express my thanks to the solidarity of the U.S. Government in our struggle against terrorism. The U.S. and Spain fully share the principles of the fight against terrorism in the global sense. But I wish to say that today I especially appreciate the fact that President Bush has specifically expressed support for the struggle the Spanish Government is carrying out against terrorism that takes place specifically in Spain. I very much appreciate that.

There are many channels for cooperation. Cooperation among Spanish and U.S. services is ongoing; it works well. In fact, what we discussed today is the enhancement of that cooperation, for it to be strengthened in the future. And certainly, we will in the immediate future see how that cooperation is going to be enhanced and strengthened.

But I would ask you please not to blend those issues with any other circumstance you may have referred to, because that is a particularly vital issue, particularly sensitive for us. And I am convinced, as I have always stated, that democracy, the rule of law will always prevail over terror and against terror. We must defeat terror. We cannot dialog with them; all we must do is defeat them. And we will do that with the help of our friends, in this case the Americans and the President of the United States, as he has said this afternoon.

President Bush. We've spent a fair amount of time today over lunch discussing terrorism, international terrorism, as well as terrorism within Spain. I confirmed our country's willingness and—strong willingness to stand side by side with the Government of Spain, to cooperate where necessary to help fight terrorism.

Freedom-loving people are going to be faced with terrorism. And countries such as ours must not yield, must not waver in the face of terrorist activity. And to the extent that we can help the Government of Spain to fight terrorism within its borders, we will do so. We've signed a communique prior to me becoming President; I can reaffirm that commitment today. And we'll jointly fight terrorism on an international basis, as well.

Part of the missile defense dialog is about fighting terrorism. If someone is able to blackmail freedom-loving countries, it could prevent countries like Spain and the United States from being forward-thinking about fighting terrorism. Terrorist activities will take place different kinds of ways in the 21st century: information terror, biological weaponry. And we committed today to combine our efforts and talents and resources to continue to fight terrorism.

Mr. President, I meant what I told you over lunch. We stand side by side with the Government of Spain and will not yield in the face of terrorism.

Kyoto Protocol/National Missile Defense

Q. You say the scientific evidence isn't strong enough to go forward with Kyoto. So how, then, do you justify your missile defense plan, when there's even less scientific evidence that that will work?

President Bush. Part of the problem with the ABM Treaty is that it prevents a full exploration of possibility. We're bound by a treaty signed in 1972 that prohibits the United States from investigating all possibilities as to how to intercept missiles. For example, the technology of intercept on launch is a technology that we must more fully explore in order to make sure that we have the defensive capabilities necessary to prevent what I call blackmail.

So part of the reasons we're having the dialog in the first place is to enable us to explore all our options, so that I can turn to the President of Spain one day and say, "Our research and development has shown us that not only can we deploy but effectively deploy the capacity to shoot down a weapon from someone that may threaten Spain, may threaten the United States, or threaten our Allies"—precisely why the debate occurs.

The ABM Treaty is a relic of the past. It prevents freedom-loving people from exploring the future. And that's why we've got to lay it aside. And that's why we've got to have the framework—the discussions necessary to explain to our friends and Allies, as well as Russia, that our intent is to make the world more peaceful, not more dangerous. Our intent is to bring stability into the world. And freedom-loving people must recognize the true threats that face democracies in the 21st century.

The days of the cold war have ended, and so must the cold war mentality, as far as I'm concerned. And I believe we're going to make great progress on this issue; I truly do. I realize it's going to require a lot of consultation, but I'm willing to listen. President Aznar had a lot of interesting points of view. He had a lot of very good questions to ask. One of them was your question: How do we know if it will work? And the only way to know—for it to work will be for the United States to spend the dollars and have the capacity to do research and development on this very important issue.

Death Penalty

Q. President Bush, this is your first trip to Europe as U.S. President. You know that it's a basic constitutional principle to be a member of the EU to abolish the death penalty. This is a constitutional principle here in Spain, in fact. So my question is, do you feel like the champion of the death penalty, as you are perceived by some of the media? You want to persuade your Allies on issues such as Kyoto and so on. Do you think there might be a chance for them to persuade you that we go back to the period when the death penalty wasn't applied in the States? Because there are two Spanish citizens on death row in Florida, in fact, where your brother is Governor.

President Aznar, did you discuss this? Did you mention the two Spaniards, specifically?

President Bush. Democracies debate issues. Democracies represent the will of the people. The death penalty is the will of the people in the United States. There are some people who don't agree with the death penalty in our country, and it's not an easy subject for any of us. But the majority of the people—and our laws reflect the majority of the people—believe that if the death penalty is certain, just, and fair, it'll deter crime.

I understand others don't agree with this position. The democracies in Europe reflect the will of the people of Europe. That doesn't mean we can't be friends; that doesn't mean we can't work in common areas of importance to our people. And that's the spirit in which I come to Europe. I recognize that not everybody agrees with the United States on positions. But there is so much more that unites us than divides us. We share common values; we trade together; we work on security matters together. And I refuse to let any issue isolate America from Europe, because Europe is too important for America's future.

My trip here is to confirm our Nation's strong commitment to NATO, and our strong commitment to work with the European Union, and our strong commitment to interface with our friends on a bilateral basis.

And so to answer your question, sure, there's going to be differences of opinion on big issues, but that will not prevent our friendship from enduring and growing stronger, as far as I'm concerned.

President Aznar. As you, yourself, said in your question, as you know, Spain has abolished the death penalty under the Constitution and, as you perfectly well know, I, personally, am against the death penalty. But as of that point, I also want to tell you that President Bush is perfectly well familiar with my position; I know his and the various circumstances affecting certain people at this point in time. However, from my political standpoint as President of the Government of Spain, I will do my utmost to bring about a strengthening of the transatlantic link and the relationship between Europe and the United States.

In my opinion, every time Europe and the States have become distanced from the security standpoint, as well as from the standpoint of prosperity and freedoms, the world has suffered seriously. I am in favor of strengthening the transatlantic ties, so I will strengthen the bilateral relationship

and strengthen developing the EU by taking on further responsibilities to bring about economic integration and enlargement.

I will work to ensure that all that development by no means weakens the transatlantic link at any time. We can cooperate on upholding freedoms, the free market, human rights, and to uphold a more stable world all over.

NATO Expansion

Q. President Bush, you've said that the expansion of NATO is a question of when, not whether. Tomorrow will you tell NATO leaders that you want that process to begin next year? And do you believe that the Balkan States should be the first to be considered?

President Bush. Tomorrow I will say it's not a question of whether; it's a question of when. We firmly believe NATO should expand. There is a process for member applicants to go through, and we support that process. I will also say that no nation should have a veto over who is admitted into NATO.

Tomorrow's speech is very important because it will reassure, I hope, our friends in NATO that this Government remains strongly committed to NATO, our troop presence in NATO, our making sure NATO is not weakened in any way. And the process will work, Judy [Judy Keen, USA Today]. The process will evolve, and when we meet a year from this fall, it will be clear who should be in and who should not be in.

President Aznar. We basically agree with that. I want to recall that in Madrid in 1997 at the NATO Summit was, in fact, when the enlargement spread to the Czech Republic, Poland, and Hungary. We've also discussed this issue, and we fully share the opinion that NATO can be enlarged. And Spain will also work to forge appropriate consensus for NATO enlargement with common agreement among the Allies.

Spain-U.S. Defense Agreement

Q. My question is for the President of the United States. Spain would like to renew the agreement on defense cooperation before the end of the year. Do you think this is possible? And is the subject to a greater presence of U.S. military in the basis of——

President Bush. Es posible; es importante. And I believe that we can finish the discussions by the end of the year, as to the U.S. presence in military bases here in Spain. And I am—we've had a very long discussion about this. There are going to be discussions this summer on the subject, and we will push hard to make sure we complete our agreement. It's an important agreement for the United States.

And I appreciate so very much our close cooperation and security arrangements with Spain. Spain is a loyal friend and a strong ally. And I'm so appreciative that the President has been straightforward and frank on a number of subjects. Our lunch today was one of the most beneficial lunches I've had since I've been the President of the United States, Mr. President. Part of the discussions were about our military agreements. Part of it was on issues that we don't agree on. Most of it is on issues where we do agree. And I leave Spain fully confident that our relationship will be very strong and our personal relationship will be very beneficial to the United States and, hopefully, to Spain, as well.

President Aznar. I'd like to confirm that it is my hope that the agreement will be ready by the end of the year. There are no things such as you mention, just a few things that need to be looked at.

I want to reiterate my thanks to President Bush for his visit to Spain and assure all of you that we have enjoyed extremely fruitful talks from the bilateral and general perspectives—EU, defense, and our cooperation in various areas around the world. I particularly expressed my thanks

to the President for his time and for being here.

Thank you very much. Good afternoon.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 5:50 p.m. at the Moncloa Palace. In his remarks, President Bush referred to President Vladimir Putin of Russia and President Fidel Castro of Cuba. A reporter referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida. President Aznar spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A portion of this news conference could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and President Jose Maria Aznar

June 12, 2001

President Bush and President Aznar reaffirm the close friendship between the United States and Spain, rooted in common history, common values and common interests in Europe, the Mediterranean, Latin America, and beyond. Building upon our Joint Declaration of January 11, 2001, we commit ourselves to the shared goals of enhanced bilateral relations, a stronger Transatlantic alliance, and a Europe whole, free and at peace.

We commit to work together and with other European states to deepen Transatlantic economic relations and to seek out solutions when we disagree. We reaffirm our commitment to the multilateral trading system and strongly support the launch of a new round of global trade negotiations this year. It is our goal to open markets, both regionally and globally. We agree to intensify our efforts to liberalize fully our bilateral civil aviation relationship. We support the integration and ongoing transformation of Europe's new democracies and support their aspirations to join Europe's major institutions.

We affirm that NATO will remain the essential foundation of Transatlantic security. We are resolved to further develop our cooperation bilaterally and within the Atlantic Alliance and continue to make essential contributions to the Alliance. NATO will continue to adapt itself to meet new missions and challenges by strengthening its capabilities; seeking to reinforce cooperation with Russia, Ukraine and other members of the Partnership for Peace; and continuing to admit to its ranks European democracies prepared to assume the responsibilities of membership. Just as Spain's entry into NATO in 1982 marked a milestone in its return to the Transatlantic community, so NATO's continuing enlargement will allow new Allies to join with and make contributions to an undivided Europe and Euro-Atlantic area. We will work together to advance NATO's enlargement at NATO's Prague Summit in November, 2002.

We support efforts of NATO's European Members and other European nations to assume greater responsibility for crisis management in Europe by committing new resources to strengthen their and NATO's capabilities and developing the ability to manage efforts where NATO as a whole chooses not to engage. The United States welcomes the European Union's European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP), intended to make Europe a stronger, more capable partner in deterring and managing crises affecting the security of the Transatlantic community. We believe it is essential that the EU develop capabilities that enable it to act when NATO as a whole is not engaged, in a manner that is fully coordinated, compatible and transparent with NATO, and to provide for the fullest possible participation of non-EU European

Allies. We also agree that the Alliance will be able to meet the 21st century's new challenges most effectively by strengthening cooperation in Transatlantic defense trade and the removal of unnecessary governmental barriers and impediments to such trade.

We reaffirm our commitment to work with European Union and other partners to consolidate the peace and build lasting stability in Southeast Europe based on democratic governance, the rule of law, and increasing integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions. We condemn extremists, such as those in Macedonia, who subvert the democratic process through the use of violence. Our two countries are committed to NATO-led operations in Bosnia and Kosovo, and will work with our allies to transfer responsibilities for public security from combat forces to specialized units and international police, and ultimately to local authorities.

We face a growing threat from the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and missiles for their delivery. We are engaged in a consultation process with all interested parties about this new threat. We agree on the need for a comprehensive security strategy that encompasses both offensive and defensive deterrent systems, continues nuclear arms reductions, and strengthens WMD and missile proliferation controls and counter-proliferation measures.

We renew our Joint Declaration commitment to combat terrorism wherever it is encountered; to cooperate closely in regions of the world where Spain and the United States share strong common interests, notably, to promote democracy and human rights in Latin America. We will continue our efforts in support of the peace process in Colombia. In this context, the July 2000 Madrid Conference on Colombia is an example of transatlantic cooperation that we seek to foster in the region. We will also cooperate to bring an end to the violence and find a lasting solution to the conflict in the Middle East.

We will help the poorest countries benefit from the international trading system and technological development, to support access to information, develop economic opportunities, and foster democratic societies across the globe. Technological development will also help overcome hunger, poverty, and disease in the developing world. With our African partners, we will jointly commit to addressing conflict and infectious disease—especially HIV/AIDS—and to promoting economic growth and good governance. It is in all of our interests to create a more stable and peaceful world and to make available the benefits of globalization to all peoples.

In order to pursue our consultations, we look forward to meeting in the United States before the end of the year, in advance of Spain's assuming the Presidency of the European Union in the first semester of 2002.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Russia
June 11, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-

month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the risk of nuclear proliferation created by the accumulation of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation that was declared in Executive Order 13159 of June 21, 2000.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,

June 11, 2001,

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 13. The notice of June 11 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report of the National Endowment for Democracy
June 11, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the provisions of section 504(h) of Public Law 98–164, as amended (22 U.S.C. 4413(i)), I transmit herewith the Annual Report of the National Endowment for Democracy for fiscal year 2000.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,

June 11, 2001.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 13.

Remarks at the Opening of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Meeting in Brussels, Belgium
June 13, 2001

Mr. Secretary General, thank you very much. It's an honor for me to be here. It's an honor to say hello to folks who I've had the honor of meeting before, and it's a real pleasure to meet other leaders in the free world.

Our nations established NATO to provide security for the free peoples of Europe and North America, to build a grand alliance of freedom to defend values which were won at great cost. We've succeeded, in part. The NATO Alliance deterred the Soviet Union. It provided the time and space for free peoples to defeat communism, and it brought the cold war to a bloodless end. Now, we have a great opportunity to build a Europe whole, free, and at peace, with this grand alliance of liberty at its very core.

That work has begun. By bringing in new members, we extended security and stability through Central Europe. By establishing the Partnership for Peace, we reached out across Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia. By our actions in the Balkans, we halted ethnic cleansing in the heart of Europe and halted a dictator in the process.

Yet, there is more to do. We must strengthen our Alliance, modernize our forces, and prepare for new threats. We must expand cooperation with our partners,

including Russia and the Ukraine. And we must extend our hands and open our hearts to new members to build security for all of Europe.

Next year we meet in the ancient capital of a new democracy. Our Ally Prague will host our next summit in November of 2002. In preparation for that meeting, we must affirm our enduring commitments by preparing for the challenges of our time.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:44 a.m. at NATO headquarters. In his remarks, he referred to NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson.

The President's News Conference With NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson in Brussels
June 13, 2001

Secretary General Lord Robertson. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for coming. The NATO heads of state and government have just completed our informal lunch, where we continued to discuss many of the themes which were raised in our formal session during this morning.

It's very rare that the Prime Ministers, Presidents, and the Chancellor have an opportunity to discuss privately among themselves the broader issues before the Alliance and our long-term strategies, but that's what we've been able to do today. And I personally believe it was an exceptionally useful meeting.

I had a chance to speak with you earlier on, on the discussions in the formal session. And I've already issued a formal press release, and I have nothing further to add at this time. But let me take this opportunity, on his very first visit to the headquarters of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, to introduce the President of the United States, President George W. Bush.

President Bush. Thank you, sir. Thank you very much for your hospitality. I've got a statement to make, and then we'll be glad to answer some questions.

Before I talk about the meeting, I do want to say a brief word on some important developments in the Middle East. I'm encouraged that both Israel and the Palestinian Authority have agreed to a cease-fire plan, and I'm proud of America's role in helping to achieve it.

Today, on my flight from Spain to here, I talked to CIA Director George Tenet, who has worked very hard to bring the parties together. He is cautiously optimistic about the agreement that's been signed.

Our country recognizes that an end to violence is a necessary first step toward implementing the Mitchell committee report and a resumption of real negotiations. All the parties must now take additional steps that will place them on the road to a just and lasting peace. All the parties must build trust by demonstrating good faith—in words, but more importantly, in deeds. This process is difficult, but hopefully it has now begun.

And as for the meeting today, I'm most pleased with the meeting. I did think we had a great discussion. We reaffirmed the deepest commitments of history's most successful alliance. We discussed new security challenges. We outlined the work ahead as we move towards next year's summit in Prague. It was a good start on a long and important agenda.

First, there was broad agreement that we must seek a new approach to deterrence in a world of changing threats, particularly the threat posed by the spread of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles. I told the Allies I'm committed to working

closely with them to address this common threat by developing a new framework for nuclear security. This framework must include greater nonproliferation and counterproliferation efforts, decreased reliance on offensive weapons, and greater transparency so that responsible nations can have greater levels of confidence.

I also spoke of my commitment to fielding limited but effective missile defenses as soon as possible. I explained that the ABM Treaty embodied the cold war nuclear balance of terror between rival superpowers. But it no longer makes sense as a foundation for relations. They should be based on mutual confidence, openness, and real opportunities for cooperation.

All this marks a major shift in thinking about some of the most critical issues of world security, and I was pleased by the open and constructive reactions. I'm encouraged that in today's meeting we saw a new receptivity towards missile defense as part of a new strategic framework to address the changing threats of our world. As one of our close Allies noted, the world is changing around us, and NATO's great strength has been a willingness to adapt and move forward. Another noted, NATO is a defensive alliance, and thus an increasingly important role should be played by defensive systems to protect all our citizens from terrorist blackmail.

Secondly, we agreed that we must reach out to Russian leaders and to a new Russian generation with a message that Russia does have a future with Europe. The United States will seek to build this strategic framework with Russia. Now that Russia has recognized a weapons-of-mass-destruction threat to Europe, future cooperative work on a new strategic framework could be a great task which brings NATO and Russia together.

Third, we agreed on the need to commit the resources that will allow NATO's forces to do their jobs. The decline in defense spending amongst NATO nations must be reversed. And when we do spend, we must spend wisely. It shouldn't be a question of whether to buy American or buy European; it should be a question of how to buy transatlantic. North American and European companies should collaborate to produce the most advanced systems at the lowest costs.

We agreed that NATO and the European Union must work in common purpose. It is in NATO's interest for the European Union to develop a rapid-reaction capability. A strong, capable European force integrated with NATO would give us more options for handling crises when NATO, as a whole, chooses not to engage. NATO must be generous in the help it gives the EU. And similarly, the EU must welcome participation by NATO Allies who are not members of the EU. And we must not waste scarce resources, duplicating effort or working at cross purposes. Our work together in the Balkans shows how much the 23 nations of NATO and the EU can achieve when we combine our efforts.

Our work together in the Balkans reminds me that—I'm going to commit to the line that Colin Powell said: "We came in together, and we will leave together." It is the pledge of our Government, and it's a pledge that I will keep.

We agreed that we must face down extremists in Macedonia and elsewhere who seek to use violence to redraw borders or subvert the democratic process. Concerning Bosnia and Kosovo, we agreed that this is a major effort, an effort that we will continue to work together on.

Fifth, and finally, we agreed that NATO must prepare for the further enlargement of the Alliance. All aspiring members have work to do. Yet, if they continue to make the progress they are making, we will be able to launch the next round of enlargement when we meet in Prague.

We agreed that all European democracies that seek to join our ranks and meet our standards should have the opportunity to do so without red lines or outside vetoes. We must never lose sight of what NATO

does and what it stands for, how it safeguards prosperity and protects democracy in an ever-widening Europe. Let us then be true to the great vision of our fathers and grandfathers, is what I said: the preservation of peace by democratic leadership, the defense of freedom through collective strength.

I'd be glad to answer some questions, starting with Jim Angle [Fox News].

National Missile Defense/ABM Treaty

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Your critics at home, sir, suggest that you are prepared to deploy a missile defense system that will not work. First, Mr. President, will you deploy defensive technologies that have not been successfully tested? And second, you've suggested that the ABM Treaty may be a problem sooner rather than later because, as you put it, it prevents us from exploring the future. When does that become a problem, and what do you do about it?

President Bush. First, it's important to—for people who are following this issue to understand that we're not asking our Allies to sign on to a specific system. We're asking our Allies to think differently and asking Russia to think differently about the post-cold-war era.

The ABM Treaty is a product of the cold war era. It was a time when the United States and Russia were bitter enemies, and the whole concept of peace was based upon the capacity of each of us—each country to blow each other up. The new threats are threats based upon uncertainty, the threats that somebody who hates freedom or hates America or hates our Allies or hates Europe will try to blow us up. And the fundamental question is, will freedom-loving nations develop a system to enhance freedom to prevent that from happening? And I make the case, yes. But before we can lay out a specific case, Jim, it's necessary to set aside the ABM Treaty so we can fully explore all options available to the United States and our Allies and friends. The ABM Treaty prevents full exploration of opportunity.

And for those who suggest my administration will deploy a system that doesn't work, are dead wrong. Of course, we're not going to deploy a system that doesn't work. What good will that do? We'll only deploy a system that does work in order to keep the peace. But we must have the flexibility and opportunity to explore all options.

I'm making good progress on this issue here in Europe. There's some nervousness, and I understand that. But it's beginning to be allayed when they hear the logic behind the rationale.

I look forward to my meeting with Mr. Putin. There's no question this is going to be an important meeting on Friday. And there's no question that this will be a topic—it won't be the only topic—that we'll discuss. It will be—the topic of missile defense will be in a part of a larger framework about how the United States and Russia can cooperate, how we can find areas to grow our economies, and how we can work together to keep the peace.

Lord Robertson, you're supposed to call on somebody.

Secretary General Lord Robertson. Am I?

President Bush. You don't have to if you don't want to. [*Laughter*]

Secretary General Lord Robertson. You're very observant, but I'll——

Macedonia

Q. Mr. President, you stressed the continuing vitality and importance of NATO as a collection of freedom-loving democracies. Nowhere in Europe is democracy more threatened at the moment than in Macedonia. There is, I see—I note from today's meetings a growing sense of alarm at developments there on the ground. For many people, it seems an obvious question: Why is this huge, well-armed military alliance not willing to put even perhaps a small number of troops into Macedonia, if

the Government there were to request it, to bring about some sort of stability, after which the very significant political reforms that are required there can be enacted?

President Bush. Well, the conversation I heard approached the subject from an opposite direction. Most people believe there's still a political solution available before the troops are committed.

I want to remind you, KFOR does have troops on the border, and we must continue the presence on the border to prevent insurgents and arms from reaching the Albanian extremists. But the sentiment I heard here was that there is still a possibility for a political settlement, a good possibility, and that we must work to achieve that settlement. Lord Robertson can speak to that very clearly; he is on his way to Macedonia in short order.

Have you told them that?

Secretary General Lord Robertson. I did, and——

President Bush. Okay, good. Well, if you didn't, I just did. [*Laughter*]

Secretary General Lord Robertson. I told them before, but they may not have been listening—[*inaudible*]. [*Laughter*]

President Bush. Anyway, he's going. And—but the idea of committing troops within Macedonia was one that most nations were troubled over. They want to see if we cannot achieve a political settlement first.

Secretary General Lord Robertson. There is a good wind behind the program of President Trajkovski that was signed up to by the National Unity Government yesterday. And there will be talks among all the political parties about the reform program at the weekend. That is a big breakthrough, and I think that that is something we all want to put our support behind. We're not talking about other options.

Bilaterally, countries have supported the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. On the border, as the President has said, there are large numbers of troops, including extra troops that have been sent down from the boundary between Kosovo and Serbia, who are policing aggressively that border and inter—indicted only the other night quite a number of those who seemed intent on mischief in that area.

What we need now is a continued ceasefire, a continuation of the existing ceasefire, a recognition by the armed insurgents that the reform process that they claim they are interested in can be achieved through democratic means, and an international community that stands full-square behind the territorial integrity of that country.

So we're not considering any other options at the moment than the bilateral support that has been given at present and by encouraging a political process which is the only way to a sustainable peace in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

National Missile Defense

Q. Mr. President, are you prepared to say here and now, sir, that you will go ahead with a limited missile defense, with or without the agreement of NATO and the European Union? And are you prepared to unilaterally abandon the ABM Treaty, or is it crucial for you, sir, to have Russia's agreement on that point?

President Bush. John, I have made it clear to our friends and Allies that I think it's necessary to set aside the ABM Treaty, but I will do so in close consultation with not only members of NATO and EU countries that are not members of NATO but, as well, with the Russians.

I believe strongly it's necessary to move forward. I think it is necessary to do so in order to make the world more peaceful. I can't imagine a world that continues to be locked into a cold war mentality when the cold war is over. Along these lines, I'll also assure our Allies and friends that we will move to reduce our offensive weapons to a level commensurate with keeping the peace, but one that is below where our levels are now.

I mean, I think it's important to go through these committees and arms controls agreements, and those are important stabilizers. But rather than wait for hours of endless negotiations in order to show the world that we're sincere about peace, on the one hand, we will consult on defensive weapons; on the other hand, we'll move by ourselves on offensive weapons. It is the right signal to do; it is the right signal to send, that the cold war must be abandoned forever.

And I believe we're making progress. I don't think we're going to have to move, as they say, unilaterally. I think people are coming our way. But people know that I'm intent upon doing what I think is the right thing in order to make the world more peaceful.

Secretary General Lord Robertson. How would you—the questions all appear to be for you, Mr. President, anyway.

President Bush. Fournier [Ron Fournier, Associated Press]. Yes, you always get to ask a question.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. I appreciate it, sir.

Following up on your comment in the Middle East, I'm wondering whether or not, because of the negotiations your administration succeeded on with the ceasefire, if you or your administration is going to get more involved, even more involved in the Middle East. Specifically, do you plan to send the Secretary of State to the region in the near future? What would it take for you, yourself, to go to the region?

President Bush. First and foremost, we're very involved. After all, it was George Tenet of the CIA that has been working long hours to bring people to the table. But this is just the first step. It's one thing for folks to sign a piece of paper; it's another thing for the parties to act. And as you notice in my statement, I called upon both parties to act.

It is still a fragile situation there. As I understand, Mr. Burns is still coming to talk to Colin this evening. He's very much engaged in the process. And we'll decide whether or not the Secretary of State or myself will become more directly involved, based upon the positive steps toward peace that now must be taken.

It's wonderful news that we've signed the document. But the fundamental question is: Will parties take steps to peace, concrete actions that will help build the confidence necessary so that peaceful-loving countries can say the cycle of violence has been finally broken and then there is the opportunity to have political discussion—but until the cycle of violence has been fully broken, as the Mitchell report calls for, that we will delay political discussions. It's important that these parties now take the document that's been signed and implement it with concrete actions.

Ed [Ed Chen, Los Angles Times].

Q. We're not——

President Bush. You only get one question at a press conference.

U.S. Approach to Allies

Q. Good afternoon, Mr. President, sir. There has been a lot of talk on this side of the Atlantic about a unilateralist approach out of Washington. I think in Washington, those of us who work there have heard that it's leadership. I wonder if you could differentiate the two for us.

President Bush. Well, I hope the notion of a unilateral approach died in some people's minds today here. Unilateralists don't come around the table to listen to others and to share opinion; unilateralists don't ask opinions of world leaders.

I count on the advice of our friends and Allies. I'm willing to consult on issues. Sometimes we don't agree, and I readily concede that, but there's a lot more that we agree upon than we disagree about. And no, I think the people of NATO now understand they've got a strong, consistent, loyal ally, one that supports the mission of NATO and one that understands not

only the history of NATO but the importance for NATO as we go down the road.

That's why our Government believes in the expansion of NATO. We believe NATO is the core of a free and peaceful Europe. And as Lord Robertson will tell you, ever since he came to my office in Washington, at the Oval Office, I have been a loyal supporter of NATO and its mission. A unilateralist is one that doesn't understand the role of NATO and one that won't fully support NATO like my Government is going to do.

Secretary General Lord Robertson. It's worth making the point, I think, that all of the heads of state and government today very much welcome the fact that the United States, and the President in particular, was willing to share the thinking process on these key issues before any decision was taken.

I would say that the statement that the President made, underlining what Secretary Powell and Secretary Rumsfeld had said about the Balkans, also was a clear signal of the inclusiveness that the American administration has in view for NATO: "We went in together; we will come out together." There will be no unilateral decisions taken by this Ally or by any other Allies. We have common mission.

And there was a warm welcome today for the fact that the thinking process on this whole new landscape of such urgency was to be the subject of detailed consultations, not just around this table today but in detail and among experts as well. That was a very good signal, and it was widely welcomed.

President Bush. Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Troop Reductions in the Balkans

Q. You campaigned on a pledge to reduce the troop presence in the Balkans. Do you now see that as politically impossible to do at this point?

President Bush. Actually, the troop presence in the Balkans has been reduced since I have become the President. It's been reduced on a reasonable timetable, one set with the United States and in consultation with Allies. It's a timetable that was embraced by NATO.

I said today in my talk that it's important for our nations to work together to put civil institutions in place that ultimately can become the framework for the reduction and, ultimately, the removal of NATO troops. But we recognize it's going to take a while. And so, what I said was, "We came in together, and we'll leave together." And that's important for our Allies to hear.

Secretary General Lord Robertson. And in the meantime, we'll get the job done together.

Thank you very much. I think that's it; we need to go.

President Bush. See you next stop.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 3:35 p.m. at NATO headquarters. In his remarks, President Bush referred to President Vladimir Putin of Russia and U.S. Ambassador to Jordan William J. Burns. He also referred to KFOR, the NATO-led security force in Kosovo. Lord Robertson referred to President Boris Trajkovski of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Exchange With Reporters in Brussels
June 13, 2001

Visit to Europe

Q. Sir, how would you sum up the trip so far?

The President. Great. Very happy with it and pleased with the progress made on key issues. Pleased that we had the opportunity to spend some quality time with fellow leaders. One thing is for certain, European leaders now know that our administration is committed to a strong NATO and a free Europe. And that was important for them to hear, and I'm real pleased.

Patients' Bill of Rights Legislation

Q. I understand, sir, that Charles Norwood has signed on to the McCain-Kennedy bill.

The President. Yes. I haven't had a chance to talk, but I'm confident we'll get a bill that I can live with if we don't. I made a speech in Florida that laid out the principles. And if those principles are not met, I meant what I said—I said I can't live with the bill. And so——

Q. Does that mean you'd veto it?

The President. Can't living with the bill means it won't become law. And I'm hopeful we can work out our differences. We're working hard to do so, and I believe we can. I believe we can have a good Patients' Bill of Rights. I support a Patients' Bill of Rights. I just don't support one that will encourage lawsuits, that will hurt consumers, and hurt people trying to find quality health care.

Q. So your red line is the ability to sue in State court, sir?

The President. No, my red lines are what I laid out in the speech. And as you remember—I'm sure you remember the speech. [*Laughter*] I'll get you a copy of it. [*Laughter*]

Visit to Europe

Assistant Press Secretary Gordon Johndroe. We'll let the President and First Lady buy some chocolate now.

The President. I'm not having much of a selection here. I am willing to share the chocolate, however, with whoever—of the stories. [*Laughter*] So who would like some?

Q. Backpedaling already? [*Laughter*]

The President. That's right, changing positions. It didn't take me long. [*Laughter*] I want you to note this was made by the proprietor—the castle—here on location, who is right here. Here's the artist. It's amazing; he looks so skinny. Must not eat his own product, I guess. [*Laughter*]

Assistant Press Secretary Johndroe. All right, you all, we're going to step outside.

The President. I will fulfill my promise, for those of you who would like a piece of chocolate.

Q. Are you enjoying your trip?

The First Lady. I'm enjoying my trip a lot. I've had a really great time. I've loved it. I've loved having an opportunity to meet my counterparts here, which I have. Today I had lunch with all the NATO—the spouses of NATO Ambassadors.

The President. The First Lady is holding a press conference, Ron [Ron Fournier, Associated Press]. You're missing it.

The First Lady. And that was it. [*Laughter*]

The President. Just as she was getting to EU expansion. [*Laughter*] I told you to leave the missiles secret. [*Laughter*]

The First Lady. Ron, actually, I was talking about meeting my counterparts here in Europe.

The President. Here's what they want—an action shot. [*Laughter*] I like a man

with a Houston Astros hat, though. I picked him out.

[*At this point, the President and First Lady continued on their way back to the motorcade.*]

Meeting With NATO Leaders

Q. Mr. President, you seemed pretty pumped up at the press conference. Did it go better than you expected, the meeting?

The President. I was very pleased. I was. I was—as you know, part of the kind of the code is not to name names. But the folks I quoted were true quotes, and I was very pleased with the reception.

Q. It sounds like your strongest support came from Eastern Europe or former Soviet bloc.

The President. As I said, I'm not going to break the code, and you're fishing for the code. But it was widespread support. It was not confined to one area of Europe. It was a good meeting, very positive meeting that gave us a chance to have a good exchange. I was very pleased with the reception and the willingness for countries to think differently and to listen to different points of view.

Visit to Europe

Q. How does it feel for you—we just asked the First Lady—but this is your first—I know you've been to Mexico and Canada, but this is——

The President. Well, this is a trip that was a very important trip because of the—the Alliance is very important. And as I said the other day, a prosperous and peaceful NATO and Europe—a prosperous Europe because of NATO is important for America. And there were some people—there was a lot of talk about unilateralism and the U.S. going it alone, and it was just very important for me to dispel those notions. And the leaders here now know that we are committed to NATO; we're committed to NATO enlargement. And tomorrow I'll have an opportunity to talk about the EU, and we'll have—after the—at the press conference you can ask me questions about how it goes there.

But there will be, you know, the tendency for, obviously, in your business to focus on where we differ. The truth of the matter is, the meeting today, the focus was on where we agree. And that was the very thing that encouraged me about it.

So I felt great walking into the press conference because I felt great after the meeting.

Upcoming Visit to Poland

Q. Sir, what's the big theme you're going to hit on Friday in Warsaw?

The President. Europe—whole, free, expanded.

Q. Bring up your father——

The President. No. Well, I mean, when they say, "President Bush," it will be brought up. But—[*laughter*].

Q. I'm just thinking about his Europe policy.

The President. No, that's right. No, it's a—kind of same values. The values haven't changed. The issues are different, but the goal of a free and united Europe is not. I'm looking forward to giving this speech because it will be given on the soil of a country that has really emerged as a result of its NATO membership and its adherence to free markets. And I'm not going to tell you any more about it because I want you to listen.

Assistant Press Secretary Johndroe. We've got to get in the vans.

The President. I can only have one press conference a day. It's unbelievable how accessible I am these days. [*Laughter*]

European Leaders

Q. Every President has European friends. Who are your European friends?

The President. Tony Blair, clearly a friend. But by not naming somebody, they'll assume that they're not a friend. They're all friends, to begin with. Jose Maria Aznar and I get along great. We had a wonderful

visit yesterday. He's a very interesting man. If there were, kind of, objective observers, they would have said the body language was very strong between us. Prime Minister Blair and I get along well.

I will get along with every leader. I haven't had a chance to nurture a relationship beyond some casual conversations with some of the leaders, but I suspect we'll have very close relations with all the leaders. But those two initially are people that I feel very comfortable in singling out. Havel is a very interesting guy whom I admire a lot. I've read some of his writings, and he's a legend in many ways in Eastern Europe. And I have a great relationship with him.

Q. Is he one of your strongest allies on missile defense?

The President. Well, as I said, there's kind of a code of silence. But I appreciate his friendship.

Okay, get out of here. [*Laughter*] We've got to pay for this.

NOTE: The exchange began at 6:24 p.m. at Mary Chocolatier. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; President Jose Maria Aznar of Spain; Michel Boey, proprietor, Mary Chocolatier; and President Václav Havel of the Czech Republic. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Exchange With Reporters in Göteborg, Sweden
June 14, 2001

European Union-U.S. Summit

Q. Mr. President, can you share with us your message for the European leaders?

The President. See, Fournier [Ron Fournier, Associated Press] asked you to ask that. [*Laughter*] I haven't made up my mind who I'm calling on at the press conference yet, so if you don't behave, you may not get called.

Q. And chances keep diminishing. Right, sir? [*Laughter*]

The President. Did you put him up to that, Ron?

Q. I'm not that smart, sir. [*Laughter*]

The President. Let me just say this: I'm honored to be the first United States President to come to Sweden, and I appreciate so very much the hospitality that we've received, and I'm so looking forward to these discussions. What the people of Sweden and Europe will realize is that mine is an administration that is deeply committed to a prosperous Europe and a whole Europe and a free Europe. And we look forward to a constructive relationship.

NOTE: The exchange began at 12:24 p.m. at Gunnebo Manor House, prior to the plenary session of the European Union-U.S. Summit. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

The President's News Conference With European Union Leaders in Göteborg, Sweden
June 14, 2001

Prime Minister Goran Persson. Mr. President, Mr. President; welcome to the press conference, all members of the media. We have had a very productive summit between the European Union and the United States. We have been discussing, as you realize, matters that is on our common agenda.

First of all, world trade, the necessity to go ahead with a new round to liberalize trade, to give a clear signal about the need to create growth in the world economy. We realize the clear linkage between the last Uruguay Round and the consecutive years of good economic growth in the world economy. Now we are in a little bit more, if not stagnant phase, at least a phase with lower growth. We need a new impetus; we need a new stimulus to the economy. And the best thing to do is to go for a new round about how to liberalize trade.

We have discussed that, also some disputes, and mechanism to solve disputes. But this is the main message: Go along with the liberalization of trade to support and stimulate growth, a common responsibility for the European Union and the United States.

The second thing we have discussed was about how to find a way to cooperate about, to combat climate change, because you know that's not a secret. We don't agree upon how we regard the Kyoto Protocol—so to say we agree to disagree about substance, according to the Kyoto Protocol. The European Union will stick to the Kyoto Protocol and go for a ratification process. The U.S. has chosen another policy. But we have the same targets, and we have to meet the same problems. Climate change is not isolated to Europe or to America; it's a global threat. So nevertheless, if you are in favor or against the Kyoto Protocol, you have to take action. So we agreed to disagree about substance, but agreed to go on with some type of procedure that can lead us back to a position that we can cooperate and try to support each other.

We will call for personal representatives to follow up our discussion. And that will mean that we send a signal that we go on ahead with the Kyoto Protocol, the American Government go on ahead with their policy, but we'll try to cooperate as much as possible and try to find a process for that. That was the second thing we discussed.

The third thing was about HIV/AIDS. There is a terrible threat for many millions, not least in Africa. A generation can be swept away—children without parents and children born with HIV. It's a tremendous threat, and something we just can't neglect. We have to take our part of the responsibility. The American President proposed a fund together with the U.N., and we discussed also how the European Union could support in that work. That was the third thing we discussed.

Then we also discussed, of course, the situation of the Balkans. We are close allies; we cooperate. And we said that we came in together, and when the day come—we don't know when—we will go out together. That is important to say. And then, we'll do everything we can to support the governments around in the region and to stay as constructive, reliable partners for the good progress, accord and democracy and economy. It's not easy, but our presence is necessary.

We discussed also the situation in the Middle East, and we have a joint statement—the first time, the European Union and the U.S.—how to support the road back for peace and reconciliation. And that is to say that we urge the partners to live

up to the cease-fire, because without an ending of violence, there will be no possibilities to go on with the so-called Mitchell report; that after the end of violence, we call for confidence-building measures and then negotiations about peace and reconciliation. We stand together. We urge both partners to go for the cease-fire and stick to it.

As you can hear, this is an agenda covering different subjects. But it's also, of course, a way to express our common values, how to cooperate about the economy, how to take responsibility for the conditions—living conditions for the next generation, how to cooperate for peace and reconciliation around the world, based on values and based on the idea that Europe and the United States have to take a global responsibility in a global partnership. That is the main content during our U.S.-EU Summit today.

I give the floor to the President of the United States.

President Bush. Mr. Prime Minister, thank you very much; Mr. President. I first want to start by thanking our Swedish hosts, particularly the King and the Prime Minister, for the generous hospitality shown to me and my wife and our delegation. Millions of Americans trace their heritage to Sweden, so it's a huge honor for me to be the first sitting President of the United States to come to this country to be with our friends.

We had great discussions over lunch and before lunch. I guess my summary is, is that friends are able to speak candidly and constructively. And our relationship with the United States—between the United States and Sweden and the United States and the European Union is strong, and it is healthy. Values and the goals we share are durable, and they're great goals.

We resolve to work closely together on issues that confront our nations. We share a strong interest in maintaining our economic ties. The EU and the United States have got the largest economic relationship in the world. Investment and annual trade come to approximately $1.5 trillion. And that's a relationship that is important to the working people of our respective countries.

Our trade relationship is strong. The recent resolution over the dispute on bananas proves that we can work to solve problems. And we'll continue to work closely with the EU in supporting a new round on global trade negotiations.

We share a commitment to building a Europe that is whole and free and at peace. We believe that we must continue to cooperate in Southeast Europe. As I told the Prime Minister—same thing I said yesterday at NATO—we went into Southeast Europe together, and we will leave together. That's a commitment of our Government. We must also work to build institutions necessary so that, at some point in time, we can take our troops out of Southeast Europe. But until that happens, our Government is committed to working with NATO and the EU to bring peace and democracy and stability to that part of the world.

The EU and the United States also understand we must be partners in confronting environmental challenges. The United States is committed to addressing climate change. We had a constructive discussion on this topic over lunch, and we agreed to create new channels of cooperation on this important topic. As the Prime Minister said, we don't agree on the Kyoto treaty, but we do agree that climate change is a serious issue and we must work together. We agree that climate change requires a global response and agree to intensify cooperation on science and on technology.

And finally, we share important challenges, as the Prime Minister mentioned: fighting HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis in Africa; helping Africa lift itself out of poverty with trade and open markets; continuing efforts to ease tension and foster peace on the Korean Peninsula. We

agree on the need for all parties to halt the violence in the Middle East.

These are great goals, and we share common purposes. And it has been my honor to represent our great Nation with the great nations of Europe in this fruitful and constructive dialog.

Thank you, Mr. Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Persson. Thank you.

President Prodi.

President Romano Prodi. This first summit has shown how solid is our partnership. More than solid, it is indispensable for U.S., for Europe, and for world peace. When we act together, we do enormous progress for peace. And we can—we have taken a few issues this morning in which our cooperation has done very concrete results.

Trade, we can launch a new global trade round in Qatar if we work together. We have today committed ourselves to this goal. We agreed on a common approach for an inclusive WTO round, and we shall also address the specific interest of developing countries and the legitimate concern expressed by civil society.

Some may think that we work—we lose too much time working on trade disputes. But it is not true. Now the real disputes are a very, very small amount. And this morning we worked to make this even smaller. We have really stated today that we want to talk rather than to litigate. And we shall do—this will be our route. We have had the recent agreement on bananas and the gluten. And we are going on in trying agreements, even in the hottest spots of the province of trade.

Of course, for the climate change, I don't repeat the difference we have, but we have decided to work together on research. And I think this is a real goal because, for the future, we can approach our position. Our objective and our duty remain the successful conclusion of the July conference in Bonn. And I was pleased to hear that the U.S. will participate in this conference. So the dialog goes on, even if there are big difference in this.

So we agreed also on the—to stop the spread of disease, notably in Africa. And we Europeans are still trying to convince toward an agreement in the pricing system to make good medicine affordable for the poorest people in the world. But on this subject we had the very interesting exchange of view and very interesting approach.

I don't repeat the work we have done together in the Balkans. The problems remain, but the European Union is assuming the leading role in this common challenge in the Balkans.

And the cooperation in the Middle East has had results, and we have also started the idea of building up some foundation for economic cooperation in the Middle East, because if we don't work also in the economic fields, we shall never have a stable peace.

Prime Minister Persson. Thank you, Romano. And you are——

President's Vision for Europe

Q. President Bush, about a decade ago, your father came to Europe, around the time that the Soviet Union was breaking up, and he said he had a broad vision for Europe and its future and its expansion. In your 5 months in office, have you formed your own vision for Europe, and would you like to share that with us?

President Bush. Tomorrow in Warsaw—I'll be glad to give you a little preview. I believe that we have an opportunity to form an alliance of peace, that Europe ought to include nations beyond the current scope of EU and NATO. I strongly believe in NATO expansion, and I believe that the EU ought to expand, as well. I believe a Europe whole and free is going to be a Europe that trades actively with the United States and with the rest of the world.

Tomorrow, Friday—I mean, Saturday I am going to be visiting with Mr. Putin.

It's at a very important time for me to visit with Mr. Putin, to assure him a couple of things: One, Russia is not the enemy of the United States; two, the cold war is over and the mentality that used to grip our two nations during the cold war must end; three, we look forward to working with Europe. Europe ought not to fear—I mean, Russia ought not to fear a Europe; Russia ought to welcome an expanded Europe on her border.

And so, my vision of Europe is a larger vision: more countries, more free trade, and one in which welcomes Russia and the Ukraine, welcomes Russia and encourages Russia to make the right choices when it comes to the institutions necessary to be able to become a partner with Europe and the United States.

Climate Change

Q. A question for Mr. Bush, if I may: After the contacts you had and the talks you had today, are there areas where you would feel like deepening the cooperation with Europe? And at the same time, are there also areas where you feel that you think so differently that this is no longer possible?

And the second question, if I may, on Kyoto: If research that you carry on together should show that there is a possibility of adding something to the Protocol, would you be interested in that, or is that a finished question? Thank you.

President Bush. Well, I think a lot of people are surprised to hear that there is a spirit of cooperation on global warming and on climate change. I said loud and clear that our Nation is willing to lead on this issue, that—and I laid out the principles necessary for leadership: One, we must stabilize emissions; two, results must be measured, and we've got to spend money and time on additional science, which we're willing to do and willing to cooperate with the E.U. on; that we must be flexible in our solution—it's important to understand that things—information changes, and therefore any solution that we agree to must be flexible; four, that we believe that our economies can grow and, at the same time, come up with climate change solutions; five, that we're willing to look at market-based solutions; and six, that the solution ought to be global. And so, to answer your question, there's a lot of ways for us to deepen discussions on this important issue.

I understand the concerns of people in Europe. The Prime Minister was most eloquent in his assessment and summary of the attitudes of people not only in Sweden but in Europe. People in our Nation care about global warming and greenhouse emissions, as well. We didn't feel like the Kyoto treaty was well-balanced. It didn't include developing nations. The goals were not realistic. However, that doesn't mean we cannot continue to work together and will work together on reducing greenhouse gases.

I've laid out an energy plan that I shared with the Prime Minister and the President that not only addresses our Nation's energy needs, because we're—I've got an emphasis on conservation, as well as renewables and natural gas and nuclear power. The energy plan, if implemented, will help with the global climate.

Our Nation is making progress. There's more to do, and we can work more with Europe. So there's an area right there that if someone would have said, "Well, they don't have much to talk about"—we've got a lot to talk about, and I look forward to the discussions.

Ron [Ron Fournier, Associated Press].

Q. Thank you, sir. On the same topic——

President Bush. There's other people up here, you know?

Q. I actually have a question for two Presidents.

President Bush. That's good. [*Laughter*]

Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change

Q. First to you. Not a single European Union nation has ratified the Kyoto treaty, which was signed when many of your counterparts were in office. Yet, you've been criticized by these same leaders for rejecting it. Why do you suppose their actions have not been as forceful as their rhetoric? And President Prodi, why haven't any EU nations ratified the treaty?

President Bush. I don't have much more to add to the subject. I think that's a good question for President Prodi. I believe people are genuine about the issue. I don't believe there's any politics, necessarily. I think people are genuinely concerned and are trying to address the issue as best as they possibly can. And—but I would be interested in your answer.

President Prodi. There is no one single country who has declared not to ratify it. The ratification process will start soon, and it started already in some countries. It's going on, and there is no one message, until now, of refusal or delay of ratification.

Future U.S.-EU Relations

Q. Mr. President Bush, how do you really look upon a stronger, more united European Union with the ambition of being the number one economy in the world? Do you see this as a threat to the U.S.? And will this lead to that U.S. will decrease its engagement in Europe in the future?

President Bush. I appreciate good competition. I believe competition brings out the best in nations and people and entities. And our Nation welcomes good, healthy competition. Secondly, I don't view European Union and its consolidation as a zero-sum game for the United States. I believe the stronger Europe is, the better it is off for America. The more peaceful Europe is, the better it is for America.

I am concerned about isolationism and protectionism, not only amongst some voices in Europe but also in my own country. And I think that we've got to do everything we can to unite to promote free trade, not only free trade for the benefit of our own people but free trade for the benefit of developing nations, as well.

We spent a lot of time talking about Africa, as we should. Africa is a nation that suffers from incredible disease, and it suffers from poverty, as well. And my way of thinking is, the only way for Africa to grow and to develop and to provide hope and opportunity for its citizens is for there to be trade between the United States and Africa, between the EU and Africa.

And so I view a strong EU as good for the world, and I welcome a strong EU. My trip here was to send that signal as loud as I can that we will remain engaged with the EU and with NATO, that we respect the EU and NATO, and we understand it's importance to the future of our country.

Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Vieques Island

Q. Mr. President, why did you decide to stop bombing exercises at Vieques Island? Were you swayed by the protests of the Puerto Rican people or were there political factors involved, such as the concerns of Puerto Rican—excuse me, Hispanic Americans?

President Bush. He's referring to the fact that upon assuming office, I was presented, like I have been on other issues, with an agreement between Puerto Rico and the United States Government that we would conduct exercises off of the island of Vieques for the United States Navy. My attitude is that the Navy ought to find somewhere else to conduct its exercises—for a lot of reasons: One, there's been some harm done to people in the past; secondly, these are our friends and neighbors, and they don't want us there.

And so I appreciate the fact that the Defense Department and the Navy responded and have made the statement loud and clear that within a reasonable period of time, that the Navy will find another place to practice and to be prepared to

keep the peace. It's the right agreement. I applaud the Defense Department and the Navy for reaching that agreement.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. Mr. President, my question is on the Middle East. Mr. Bush, do you see Europe and the United States as equal and—fully equal partners and mediators in the Middle East conflict?

President Bush. I see Europe and the United States with the need to speak with one voice and one voice only, and that is, implement Mitchell, starting with breaking the cycle of violence. The EU has had some constructive meetings in the Middle East, and we appreciate their efforts. The Prime Minister went to the Middle East; he shared with us his concerns and what he saw. But what we must do as friends and allies is say only one thing and work toward only one goal right now, and that is to stop the cycle of violence. There should be no—understand, there should be no—political dialog isn't going to happen until the violence stops.

And all parties have got to understand that if there's a genuine desire for a more peaceful situation, the ability to discuss a wide range of issues, that they've got to break the cycle of violence. And we're committed to working together to do just that. We're committed to spending our capital and energies.

The Middle East is consuming a lot of time in my administration, as it should. It's a very important part of the world. I'm pleased to report yesterday in Brussels that the Tenet initiative was able to at least get signatures on a piece of paper. But signatures are just that until there's action, and there must be action. And that's the message that the EU leaders and my country is going to send to the parties involved.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 4:27 p.m. at the Massan Convention Center. President Bush met with Prime Minister Goran Persson of Sweden, in his capacity as President of the European Council, and President Romano Prodi of the European Commission. In his remarks, President Bush referred to King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden and President Vladimir Putin of Russia. He also referred to the Report of the Sharm el-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee, chaired by former Senator George J. Mitchell, issued April 30.

Göteborg Statement: Summit of the United States of America and the European Union

June 14, 2001

Today in Göteborg, we, the leaders of the United States and the European Union, reaffirm our historic partnership. Our relationship is founded on strong and enduring ties between our peoples and shared fundamental values, including respect for human rights and individual liberty, democratic government and economic freedoms.

What unites us far outweighs that which divides us. From this foundation, we are determined to forge a common and cooperative approach to the complex and changing global environment in which we live and the new challenges we face. Experience has taught us that, when the U.S. and EU work hand-in-hand, either bilaterally or multilaterally, we can be an engine for positive global change, nurturing the development of democratic regimes, opening trade and investment, working to reduce poverty, and protecting the environment.

Today's meeting takes place under conditions few of our ancestors could have imagined. The European-American bond of the last two generations has forged a great peace—rooted in democracy, free markets and human rights—that is our responsibility to preserve, deepen and extend. We renew our commitment to address in concert the most pressing bilateral, regional and global issues of the day.

Strengthening Our Transatlantic Bond

We are determined to strengthen our transatlantic bond. We agree that, for our partnership to be a stable platform for our common global agenda, we must address our differences honestly and seek, in good faith, constructive solutions. This we intend to do.

The U.S. and EU enjoy one of the deepest economic relationships in the world—the vast majority of trade and investment flows in an open, unfettered manner across the Atlantic. When this is not the case, we agree that consultation, rather than litigation, should be the preferred method of managing our disagreements. Moreover, we resolve to settle our trade disagreements more quickly and effectively. We are also determined to work together to explore ways to achieve this objective, including through mediation, and to redouble our efforts to find practical and mutually acceptable solutions to all outstanding trade disputes, in accordance with WTO rules. In this context, we welcome in particular the agreement to resolve the dispute on bananas. Furthermore, we reaffirm our determination to comply with recommendations of the WTO Dispute Settlement Body.

The EU is working to acquire a civilian and military crisis management capability, which will reinforce the Union's ability to contribute to international peace and security in accordance with the principles of the UN Charter and make the EU a stronger, more capable partner in deterring and managing crises, thereby also enhancing the security of the Transatlantic Community. The U.S. welcomes the efforts of the EU to strengthen its capabilities and to develop the ability to manage crises, including through military operations, where NATO as a whole is not engaged, and in a manner that is fully coordinated, where NATO interests are involved, and transparent with NATO, and that provides for the fullest possible participation of non-EU European allies. In particular, the commitments made by the EU Member States concerning military capabilities will, as they are implemented, strengthen both the EU and the European pillar of the Atlantic Alliance.

One of the unique aspects of our relationship is the development of transatlantic civil society dialogues. We will continue to benefit from their advice and perspective as we confront the challenges of the future. We encourage efforts to intensify the Transatlantic Legislators Dialogue between the European Parliament and the Congress of the United States, a dialogue which brings our peoples closer together.

Working to Promote Peace and Prosperity in Regions throughout the World

We remain committed to forging innovative solutions to resolve conflicts and will continue to promote peace, stability, democracy and economic renewal throughout the world.

We are gravely concerned by the developments in the Middle East. We welcome and support the report by the Sharm el-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee. We urge both sides to implement the report's recommendations, in all aspects, including ending the violence, taking confidence-building measures and resuming negotiations. We welcome the constructive initiative taken by Egypt and Jordan to that end. We see no alternative to a negotiated solution based on UN Resolutions 242 and 338, and the principle of land for peace. We will continue to cooperate closely to promote peace in the region.

In recent months, we have strengthened our already close collaboration to bring peace, stability, democracy and economic renewal to South East Europe. We welcome the positive developments in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, we call upon all partners to contribute actively to the full implementation of the Dayton agreement, which remains the key element in building a lasting peace. In Kosovo, we welcome the promulgation of the constitutional framework for provisional self-government as a major step in building a peaceful, multi-ethnic and democratic society. We urge the people of Kosovo to condemn the use of violence and isolate extremists. In the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, we will continue to coordinate our efforts to promote a political solution to the current crisis. In this context, we support the political reform dialogue and look forward to a report in the coming days. In cooperation with NATO and OSCE, we have responded quickly and firmly to threats to peace in the region. Together, we are endeavoring to prevent extremism from undermining the democratic process and stress the need for political, not military, solutions.

We reaffirm our support for the Stability Pact for South East Europe. In order to encourage the countries of the region to promote democracy, the rule of law, protection of minorities, the inviolability of international borders and regional reconciliation and cooperation, we will continue to engage all States in the region through the Stability Pact and, in the case of the EU, also within the framework of the Stabilization and Association Process. Our objective will be to encourage political and economic reforms, among them those designed to enhance private sector investment in the region, in order to ensure long-term economic renewal. We urge all governments in the region to cooperate with the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia in bringing war criminals to justice.

We fully support President Kim Dae-Jung's policy for peace and reconciliation on the Korean peninsula. We discussed the results of the EU high-level mission to the two Koreas and affirmed the importance of the DPRK leadership's adherence to its commitment to maintain the moratorium on missile tests and to continue the process initiated at the inter-Korean Summit We also discussed the U.S. decision to enter into a serious discussion with North Korea on a broad agenda, which was welcomed by the EU. We agree that the inter-Korean dialogue and cooperation, non-proliferation and human rights will remain issues of vital importance for further progress in developing our ties with the DPRK.

We recognize the progress made since 1991 and emphasize the importance to Europe, to the transatlantic community and the world of Russia's full transition into a democratic, free market state, enjoying constructive relations with its neighbors and close ties to the transatlantic community. We pledge to continue working together and with Russia towards that goal, and will pursue a dialogue with Russia that is constructive, cooperative and, where warranted, frank. We are concerned about recent adverse developments regarding media, which should remain independent and free of interference. We call upon the Russian Government to pursue actively a political settlement to the conflict in Chechnya.

The U.S. and EU strongly support an independent, sovereign Ukraine with close ties to the transatlantic community but are concerned about domestic developments affecting democratic and free market reforms. We support Ukraine's leaders in their pursuit of reforms that secure Ukraine's future prosperity and urge them to continue to follow this path. We remind Ukraine of the need to send a strong signal to the international community by responding positively and transparently to concerns over human rights, independent media and free elections.

We will intensify our political dialogue on the Southern Caucasus, where enhanced stability is a common interest. In that regard, the U.S. and EU remain committed to strengthening Georgia's sovereignty, independence, and transition to democracy and free market economy. We urge all sides in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict to continue their efforts to find a peaceful settlement based on mutual compromise.

Reaffirming Our Global Responsibilities and Commitments

We share a unique responsibility to confront issues of global concern and impact, and today we reiterated our commitment to address growing global challenges.

We are committed to launching an ambitious new round of multilateral trade negotiations at the WTO Ministerial Meeting in Doha, and, in our high level discussions in recent weeks, have made progress towards this shared goal. We seek a round that will lead both to the further liberalization of world trade and to clarifying, strengthening and extending WTO rules, so as to promote economic growth and equip the trading system to meet the challenges of globalization. The new round must equally address the needs and priorities of developing countries, demonstrate that the trading system can respond to the concerns of civil society, and promote sustainable development. We will work closely together and with our partners in the coming weeks to secure consensus to launch a round based on this substantive and forward looking agenda.

We also welcome the steady progress made so far on WTO implementation and are ready to examine ways to make further progress in connection with the launch of a new round of trade negotiations. We will also reinforce and improve our provision of technical assistance to build capacity, including capacity to support negotiations, in developing countries, so as to aid both their implementation of WTO agreements and help them to integrate more fully into the trading system, including the dispute settlement mechanism. Finally, we will continue to make efforts to secure the early accession of candidate countries to the WTO, with particular attention to the specific situation of least developed countries. This will make the WTO a truly universal organization.

Recalling that the dispute settlement mechanism of the WTO is a central element in providing security and predictability to the multilateral trading system, the U.S. and EU undertake to work constructively to improve that mechanism.

We agree on the need for an integrated and comprehensive approach to confront the diseases HIV/Aids, Malaria and Tuberculosis, particularly in Africa, emphasizing prevention in a continuum of treatment and care, and spurring research and development. We support the establishment of a global fund to fight these diseases. We are also working together to ensure the success of upcoming events, such as the UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS in promoting an effective global response to this scourge. We welcome the steps taken by the pharmaceutical industry to make drugs more affordable. In the context of the new global fund, we will work with the pharmaceutical industry and with affected countries to facilitate the broadest possible provision of drugs in an affordable and medically effective manner.

We celebrate the important contributions migrants have made to our countries. Respect for the individual right to seek asylum is also an essential democratic value of our societies. Therefore, we underline the importance of a comprehensive and integrated approach to asylum and migration based on a common commitment to human rights, existing international agreements, and support for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. We will focus on a broad range of issues related to asylum, illegal immigration and mass influxes of refugees and displaced persons.

We emphasize the need to take mutually reinforcing action in response to common problems in fighting international crime. We have, therefore, launched multi-annual cooperation in several areas, such as trafficking in human beings, cybercrime and crime related to drugs.

We had an interesting and open dialogue here in Göteborg on climate change, which will continue. We recognize that climate change is a pressing issue that requires a global solution. The U.S. and the EU are both committed to providing strong leadership on climate change. Prompt, effective and sustainable action is needed, consistent with the ultimate objective of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) of stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere. We are determined to meet our national commitments and our obligations under the UNFCCC through a variety of flexible means, drawing on the power of markets and technology. In this context, we agree on the importance of intensifying cooperation on climate-related science and research. We disagree on the Kyoto Protocol and its ratification, but we are determined to work together in all relevant fora to address climate change and will participate constructively in the resumed COP 6 in Bonn. Our efforts must ultimately result in an outcome that protects the environment and ensures economic growth compatible with our shared objective of sustainable development for present and future generations.

Looking to the Future

We have also taken a fresh look at the mechanisms of U.S.-EU cooperation in the context of the changing global environment. Whether working together to resolve disagreements, promote peace among our neighbors or combat threats to the broader world, we seek greater results. To focus our attention and efforts on elements in our common agenda where progress is both necessary and possible, we have selected the following strategic themes for cooperation over the next several years, keeping in mind the need for flexibility in responding to unforeseen events. Within these themes, we have identified immediate priorities on which we seek tangible progress before our next Summit.

Addressing security challenges: Preventing conflict and managing crises; fighting terrorism; promoting non-proliferation;

Promoting Growth and a Multilateral Trading System: Reaching agreement on the scope of the new round and working together to solicit support for the agreement in the run-up to the WTO Ministerial in Doha;

Fighting Crime: Cooperating in fighting trafficking in human beings, drugs and cybercrime;

Protecting the Environment: Promoting effective ways to address climate change;

Fighting against poverty in the developing countries: Combating the communicable diseases HIV/Aids, Malaria and Tuberculosis.

Promoting the Digital Economy and making its benefits available to all citizens will be an important strategic theme for our dialogue for the years to come.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Statement on Senate Action on Education Reform Legislation
June 14, 2001

I commend the Senate for passing an education reform bill that will significantly improve and strengthen our public schools. The reforms in this bill reflect the core principles of my education agenda: accountability, flexibility, local control, and more choices for parents. I congratulate Chairman Kennedy, Ranking Member Gregg, and all those Senators—Democratic, Republican, and independent—whose hard work helped to produce this bill.

We are close to a monumental achievement with bipartisan support. As a result of our efforts, we have wide agreement on the principles of education reform. I urge Congress to remain true to these principles during the upcoming conference committee.

Many also agree on the need to provide historic levels of funding to help States and local schools to implement these needed reforms. Additional spending on education surely is justified. But the increases must be carefully directed and effectively spent. In the past, increased spending and the creation of multiple new programs have not improved student achievement.

As a Nation, we made a promise 36 years ago that disadvantaged children would be well educated in our country. We have not yet fulfilled that promise. Now we must. If we are to do so, we must change our approach. I challenge the House and Senate conferees to keep this imperative for real change in mind as they begin their deliberations. Empowering parents and educators closest to the children, insisting on real accountability for results, streamlining and placing more focus on proven programs, and increasing resources in an intelligent and reasonable manner tied to the reforms all work. Adhering to these approaches can provide us an historic opportunity for our children and our country. Let's seize it.

Remarks on Departure From Göteborg and an Exchange With Reporters
June 15, 2001

The President. Good morning. Thank you all very much for coming. Laura and I have had a fantastic trip here to Sweden, and we want to thank all the folks at our Embassy for working hard to make our trip go so well. First, I want to make sure you meet your boss, and that's the Secretary of State, Colin Powell, who's doing a fantastic job for America. I want to thank Ambassador Lyndon Olson and his wife, Kay, for their hospitality and their service to the United States of America. They have served our country with distinction and class, and we're very grateful. I want to thank Bruce Carter for his hard work to make sure our trip went so well. And I want to thank Gillian Milonovic for her work, as well. [*Applause*] Gillian has got a few supporters out there.

Before we come around and shake your hand and thank you, I do want to talk about a piece of good news that we got out of our United States Senate yesterday. Yesterday the Senate overwhelmingly voted for an education bill that I had submitted to the Congress. It is a piece of legislation that will reform public education in America. It is a meaningful, real reform.

I want to thank Senator Kennedy and Senator Gregg for their bipartisan cooperation. I urge the conferees from the House and the Senate to act quickly on this legislation, so that America can say we put the reforms in place and we can truly say that no child in our country will be left behind.

I'm sure you've read about the so-called divisiveness in Washington. In short order, we have passed meaningful tax reform, and we are now on our way to meaningful education reform. And I'm so proud of the accomplishments not only of the administration but also of the United States Congress.

And I'm proud of your service to America, as well. You stand tall for a great country, and for that we are very grateful.

God bless you all, and God bless America.

Education Reform Legislation

Q. Mr. President, are you sorry you didn't get vouchers?

The President. I'm very pleased. It's a great piece of legislation.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:48 a.m. at Landvetter Airport. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

The President's News Conference With President Aleksander Kwasniewski of Poland in Warsaw, Poland
June 15, 2001

President Kwasniewski. Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen. First of all, once again, I'd like to extend my words of welcome to all those attending the press conference. And I wish to express my joy upon the occasion of the official visit of the President of the United States of America, George Walker Bush, Jr., in Poland.

We are very honored that the first visit of the newly elected President of the United States of America is taking place in Poland. We take it as a symbol but, at the same time, as the confirmation of friendly and allied relations that Poland and the United States have enjoyed for more than 100 years and which have developed in the last decade very strongly, and that is a good reason for respect. I, once again, want to welcome Mr. President Bush here in Poland.

This transformation began in Poland over 12 years ago is successful. Also, thanks to our allies, to our friends, and also thanks to American politics—politicians, businessmen, all those who have supported us in this uneasy work. We remember the visit of George Bush, Sr., President of the United States in 1989, when Poland was just starting its transformation. We are happy, Mr. President, that we can demonstrate a better and changed democratic Poland to you, the Poland that is using its political opportunity.

During our talks, we discussed the international border, and I wish to accept the determination on the part of the United States towards the enlargement of NATO. We're happy to say that we have similar views over the political situation and political relations in Central and Eastern Europe. The United States has been very supportive of Poland's aspirations as a future member of the European Union.

We're very close not only in the political sense, but in everyday cooperation we have been very close, as well. We have adopted the common resolution of the President of the Republic of Poland and the President of the United States of America. You've been distributed this important document

because it refers to all important, most important issues and, at the same time, it has been written in a very legible and understandable language to everyone. In our joint resolution, there is nothing that relates to diplomacy, but there is only the substance of our very close, friendly, and allied relations.

This is what I wanted to say by introduction and welcome you, Mr. President, once again.

President Bush. Thank you for the beautiful weather.

President Kwasniewski. We have special relations. [*Laughter*]

President Bush. I'll try to highlight that in my speech this afternoon.

I'm the third President to come to your beautiful land since Poland regained freedom. Many more will follow, because the bond between our two countries is very strong, and that bond is formed of many things, starting with our love for freedom.

Over the last generation, the people of Poland have suffered greatly to win freedom. America stood with Poland in that struggle, and we stand with you today in facing the challenges of a new era of democracy and economic progress.

Our hopes for peace for Poland and all of Europe depend on NATO. Since joining the Alliance 2 years ago, Poland has contributed greatly to its success and serves as a fine example for all future members of NATO. The President and I talked about how NATO must continue to enlarge, to increase Europe's security. We talked about the challenges and opportunity NATO faces in its relations with Russia and with neighbors in transition, like the Ukraine.

Today, U.S. and Polish soldiers serve side by side as part of the NATO contingent that seeks to bring peace and democracy to the Balkans. It's important that Poland's military remain well-equipped. To that end, I'm pleased to announce the United States is making the necessary legislative preparations to transfer a second frigate to the Polish Navy.

The President and I also discussed Poland's move toward membership in the European Union. The EU is America's largest trading partner outside North America. Joining Poland's economy to that of the EU is in all our interests and will only strengthen America's ties with all our Atlantic partners.

The interests of America and Poland are clear, and they are the same: To continue building a more stable Europe; to strengthen the institutions of democracy, freedom, commerce, and mutual security; and to promote the prosperity that comes through investment and open trade.

Another topic we covered today was the common commitment of the United States and Poland to spreading prosperity and democracy in this part of the world. And I was pleased to inform the President that the Polish American Enterprise Fund will transfer $20 million to the new Polish-American Freedom Foundation. In this way, our countries can continue the joint work of promoting democracy and free markets and the rule of law throughout Central and Eastern Europe.

I look forward to my meeting, as well, with the Prime Minister. I look forward to conveying my respect to him for his role in helping bring Poland into NATO. Friendship and cooperation between our two countries is strong and is growing stronger. The Republic of Poland today is an equal partner in the work of building greater prosperity and security across Europe, and it's a huge honor for me to be here.

Thank you, Mr. President.

President Kwasniewski. Thank you, Mr. President. Now is time for questions.

NATO Expansion

Q. In accordance with the Brussels decision yesterday, in one year's time there will be further candidates in Europe to negotiate their membership. Will that one year be a sufficient period of time, and will one of the criteria be for NATO membership

so that NATO could constitute a wholeness, a whole area, in political terms?

President Bush. If I understand the question correctly, it was about NATO expansion.

Q. Yes.

President Bush. My Government believes NATO should expand. We believe no one should be excluded because of history or location or geography. And we don't believe any nation should have a veto over who is accepted. We also believe a lot of progress has been made toward achieving the requirements necessary to be accepted into NATO and look forward to the Prague summit a year from this fall, to a positive statement of expansion. I think it will happen; to the extent, we will see. How many nations are accepted, we will see. But in my speech today I will say, it's not a matter of whether NATO expands; it's a matter of when NATO expands. We strongly stand on the side of expansion of NATO.

Major Garrett [Cable News Network].

Russia

Q. President Kwasniewski, thank you for your hospitality. President Bush, there are fresh reports today about concerns of the U.S. Government of proliferation from the Russian Government, selling certain materials to nations such as Iran. And before we left on this trip, your National Security Adviser expressed some doubts about President Putin's commitment to democracy. I'm curious, sir: What is your general assessment of Russia on these two vital questions, proliferation and its commitment to democracy? Thank you, sir.

President Bush. As you know full well, I've got a meeting with President Putin tomorrow. And I am really looking forward to it because it's an opportunity for me to say to President Putin, the United States is no longer your enemy.

I also will stress that my vision of Europe includes Russia and that Russia should not fear the expansion of freedom-loving people to her borders. Russia has got vast potential and great opportunity, particularly if she makes a commitment to democratic institutions and to the rule of law and embraces the open market.

I am concerned about some reports of the proliferation of weapons throughout—on Russia's southern border, for example, countries on her southern border, and I'll bring that subject up. I think it's important for Russia to hear that our Nation is concerned about the spreading of weapons of mass destruction. And I'll bring it up in the context of explaining why it is important for us think differently about missile defenses, to think differently about the cold war doctrine that is codified in the ABM Treaty of 1972. The more capacity a nation has to develop a—a nation that can't stand America or our friends or Allies—to develop weapons of mass destruction, the more necessary it is for freedom-loving people to have the capacity to halt any political blackmail they may choose to inflict upon us.

And so I will talk about democracy—democracy building. I'll talk about capital investment and the need for capital to have open markets and rule of law, transparency in economy, and I will also talk about security measures.

U.S. Visas for Polish Visitors

Q. This is a question to Mr. Bush—[*inaudible*]—to Poland, as a symbol of our openness and our sympathy for the U.S. Unfortunately, this gesture is not returned. I'd like to ask you, may Poles count on not needing American visas soon? Thank you.

President Bush. American visas?

Q. Yes. Yes, sir.

President Bush. In other words, whether or not someone going to America needs a visa?

Q. Yes, sir.

President Bush. We can discuss that issue at the State Department level. But Poles are welcome in America. We welcome you to come. There are, as you know—Chicago

is a city with many, many people of Polish heritage. I would hope that it's easy to travel to our country.

David Gregory [NBC News].

Q. Mr. President, good afternoon.

President Bush. Thank you, sir. You look mighty sharp today, by the way.

Q. Well, thank you very much.

President Bush. Don't you think? [*Laughter*]

Russia

Q. I wonder if you would be specific, sir, about what incentives you're prepared to offer Russian President Putin to get both his blessing and perhaps his cooperation in missile defense. And additionally, as you just mentioned, you no longer consider Russia an adversary. Then what is it? What do you want Russia to become—an ally, a strategic partner, a strategic adversary, what?

President Bush. My hopes are the same as the President's hopes about Russia. We want Russia to be a partner and an ally—a partner in peace, a partner in democracy, a country that embraces freedom, a country that enhances the security of Europe.

The discussion tomorrow, David, is going to be a broad discussion. It won't focus just on defenses, security arrangements. It will focus on a frame of mind and an attitude. This is my first meeting with the President, and certainly won't be my last. The purpose of the meeting is to share a vision about Russia's role in the world and in Europe. It is to assure—it is to provide assurances to Russia that our country doesn't want to diminish the nation; we want to help elevate the nation. We will have a long discussion about the role of capital in a society, that if Russia makes the right choices, she will attract a lot of capital, U.S. capital. Russia has got enormous resources and great potential.

This is the first of what I hope are many meetings between Mr. Putin and me, and many discussions. And first and foremost is to develop a trust between us. He doesn't know me, and I don't know him very well. But at my press conference tomorrow, I am confident I will be able to say I've got a pretty good feel for the man, and he's got a good feel for me. And he'll see that I'm the President of a peace-loving nation, a nation that wants Russia to succeed and do well. The definition of the relationship will evolve over time, but first and foremost, it's got to start with the simple word "friend."

National Missile Defense

Q. The first question to President Kwasniewski: I am intrigued whether you used the opportunity during your talks with the President, and have you asked the question about the missile defense? Have you talked also about Brussels, and have you developed that subject, or have you rather concentrated on bilateral relations and—in connection between Russia and NATO and good relations between NATO and Russia—and of course, in future relations in the world?

President Kwasniewski. When it comes to the missile defense system, following the presentation of President Bush's opinion in Brussels, the case seems very clear. The United States wishes to build this system, not exclusively safeguarding its own interests but to reinforce a general world security. And the United States wants to do some more research and enter dialog with all partners, both in NATO as well as in—with Russia and other partners about that issue.

And I think this is a very rightful and a very appropriate position. And if we're going to work along these lines, it may turn out that the new security systems are not controversial at all and that they would not constitute any problems for us but would, rather, reinforce our feeling of security. It goes beyond any doubt that the cold war is over and that today we do not have such enemies that we used to have in the past and that it is possible to cooperate with

every democratically organized state in the world.

We're convinced that if reaching these decisions could be—if these decisions could be achieved through a dialog and the search for opinions in the form of a dialog, then certainly we will achieve mutual understanding.

And this is how I understood President Bush's presentation in Brussels. And I think that President Bush's presentation actually took away all those fears that were connected with this position. I think this is a very reasonable, very appropriate attitude on the part of the United States of America. Star Wars was an idea that matched the ideological confrontation. Today we're talking about global security, and these are completely two different animals.

President Bush. I appreciate what the President said in the meeting that went on in Brussels, and he's right. There was receptivity to a new way of thinking about the ABM Treaty. And I was very pleased to see how forward-leaning many nations were during our discussion. There are a lot of leaders who understand that the old cold war mentality is not necessary anymore, that it's time to set a new strategic framework for the peace of Europe and peace for the world. I don't know what the press reports are like, but I can assure you, inside the meeting there was a receptivity that was very warm and for which I was very grateful, and the President just reflected that.

Secondly, Poland serves as an example of what's possible. One of the reasons I came here was to be with my friend, but I also came here to show nations that are hungry for democracy or striving for democracy or looking at democracy what's possible. And Poland serves as a bridge and an important example. If you believe in a Europe whole and free and secure, a good place to make that case is right here.

And so, you bet, we talked about Poland's important role, and it's an incredibly important role. We spent time talking about the Ukraine, as well. Poland has played, thanks to the President's leadership, a very important role in the Ukraine. The Ukraine is a country in transition, and Poland and the United States and other nations in Europe must work with the Ukraine to help Ukraine make the right decisions and right choices for the future. And those decisions are freedom and democracy and open markets, the very same values embraced by Ukraine's neighbor Poland. I'm proud of the accomplishments of the President, and proud of the accomplishments of this great people.

Holly [Holly Rosenkrantz, Bloomberg News].

General Electric-Honeywell Merger/ National Missile Defense

Q. The Europeans have never rejected a merger between a U.S. and European company, but they're set to reject a deal between GE and Honeywell, the largest merger ever. In your talks this week, has your administration raised the issue? And if the deal is rejected, what would that do for U.S.-European relations?

And Mr. Kwasniewski, how deep is Poland's support for the President's missile defense deal, and do you have reservations about it? Thank you.

President Kwasniewski. Well, I explained our position in last question. When we will discuss not about MD system in sense of American security and some technical concept, but we'll see it is necessary to create effective security system for new world, for global world after World War II and after cold war. So I think we can discuss many details, and we can support such concept.

I repeat again what President Bush said in Brussels. I understood American approach to this question as a very open, very full of wish of dialog. And—in speech and statement of President Bush in Brussels, it was a concept not for the United States; it was a concept for all of us and a concept which is absolutely different than everything what we had during cold war. That

is not the repetition of Stars War again. That is a new idea how to create better system for security, which can be for disposal of all of us, of NATO countries and all countries, including Russia and then China. So I think this approach is extremely interesting and is necessary to continue this dialog.

President Bush. We have brought up the proposed merger at the appropriate levels during this trip and before the trip. Our Government looked at the merger and approved it. The Canadian Government looked at the merger and approved it, and I am concerned that the Europeans have rejected it. That's all I've got to say on it.

Thank you, all.

President Kwasniewski. We have—no questions more? One. You know, this is a souvenir for Poland. One question more, please.

President Bush. All you're trying to do is butter up to your press corps. [*Laughter*]

Q. A question to President Kwasniewski: Would you be so kind as to mention what is included in the joint declaration? We received it in the English version. Do you know if there's any Polish joke?

President Kwasniewski. That is the main mistake of the politician, to give chance for next question. [*Laughter*]

Thank you very much for your attention. Thank you.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 12:40 p.m. in the Presidential Palace. President Kwasniewski spoke in Polish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. In his remarks, President Bush referred to Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek of Poland and President Vladimir Putin of Russia. A portion of this news conference could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and President Aleksander Kwasniewski

June 15, 2001

President George W. Bush and President Aleksander Kwasniewski affirm the deep friendship that exists between the United States and Poland, based on our common commitment to democratic values and our common resolve to build a stronger Transatlantic alliance and a 21st century Europe whole, free, and at peace. For more than ten years Poland and the United States have worked together to advance and maintain democracy in Europe. This is made possible by the existence of an independent Poland, a vision for years nurtured by Poles who, among the first of the nations of Central and Eastern Europe, initiated a successful march to freedom. The friendship of the two countries is deeply rooted in a common tradition of striving towards freedom, a goal fostered for generations by Americans of Polish descent who, while contributing to the success of the United States, never forgot the country of their ancestors.

We affirm that NATO will remain the essential foundation of Transatlantic security. We will work together and with our other NATO Allies to adapt NATO to new missions and new challenges, by strengthening its capabilities; admitting to our ranks European democracies prepared to assume the responsibilities of membership; and extending cooperation with Ukraine, Russia, and other members of the Partnership for Peace. Poland's entry into NATO in 1999 marked a milestone in its return to the Transatlantic community and increased Europe's security overall. NATO's continuing enlargement will allow new Allies to join

with and make contributions to a more secure and undivided Europe and Euroatlantic area. We will work together to advance NATO's enlargement, upon meeting objective criteria by the candidate countries, at NATO's Prague Summit in November 2002. The future enlargement of NATO will significantly contribute to the security of the Euroatlantic community of nations.

Poland and the United States support efforts of NATO's European Union members and other EU nations to assume greater responsibility for crisis management by committing new resources to strengthen their and NATO's capabilities and developing the ability to manage efforts where NATO as a whole chooses not to engage, through the European Union's European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). The United States and Poland believe it is essential that the EU develop capabilities in a manner that is fully coordinated, compatible, and transparent with NATO, and to provide for the fullest possible participation of non-EU European Allies.

Poland's success in building democracy and market economy is relevant to the entire region of Central and Eastern Europe. Poland and the United States reaffirm their support for future Ukrainian integration into Western institutions as a solid base for Ukrainian sovereignty, independence, free market economy and civil society. We pledge to work with our allies to this end, and call on Ukraine's leadership to rebuild a consensus for the reforms needed to achieve this goal. We note with satisfaction the successful completion of United States programs assisting Poland's economic reforms, and agree to cooperate in supporting Poland's efforts to share the lessons of Poland's experience with neighbors seeking assistance.

We note with pride the achievements of the Polish American Enterprise Fund, one of the first initiatives launched in the new, free Poland by President George H.W. Bush, which achieved enormous success, and continues its efforts through its successor foundation, the Polish American Freedom Foundation (PAFF). We are gratified by the growing role of the PAFF and other civic organizations as a conduit for sharing Poland's free market, democratic experience in the region.

We are committed to strengthening mutual contacts by creating an environment conducive for investment and growth of trade. We are certain that young generations of Poles and Americans will continue to look for solutions to problems and challenges of the new millennium. This is another way in which Poland, the United States and their friends are working together to nurture democracy and prosperity.

We reaffirm our commitment to work with the European Union and other partners to consolidate peace and build lasting stability in Southeast Europe based on democratic governance, the rule of law, and increasing integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions. We condemn extremists, such as those in Macedonia, who subvert the democratic process through the use of violence. Our two countries are committed to NATO-led operations in Bosnia and Kosovo, and will work with our allies with a view to transfer, step by step and as circumstances will permit, responsibilities for public security from combat forces to specialized units and international police, and ultimately to local authorities.

We will continue to combine our efforts in promoting observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Europe and beyond. We will continue to work together on new challenges to security, going beyond military threats, such as combating terrorism and organized crime. While noting the complex nature of the world's problems, we will undertake and support initiatives aimed towards such goals as balanced development, fighting drug trafficking and the spread of the HIV virus. We recognize the fundamental importance of human

rights and their impact on international security, and shall continue to advocate worldwide respect for them.

We face a common threat from the growing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and increasingly sophisticated missiles for their delivery. We are engaged in a consultation process with all interested parties about this new threat. We agree on the need for a comprehensive security strategy that encompasses both offensive and defense deterrent systems, continues nuclear arms reductions, and strengthens WMD and missile proliferation controls and counter-proliferation measures.

We reaffirm that Poland's transatlantic economic ties should facilitate its accession into the EU. Recognizing our common goal of open markets, we both support the launch of a new multilateral trade round this year. The United States welcomes Poland's candidate status in the European Union and recognizes that EU membership will provide the United States and Poland with new trade and investment opportunities.

We note with satisfaction the efforts by public and private institutions in our two countries to address the crimes and injustices of World War II and the Holocaust. We hope to see prompt implementation of the multilateral agreement on compensation for victims of slave and forced labor during the Second World War.

Recognizing the historic ties and democratic values that link our two peoples, we pledge to work together as friends and close allies in Europe and beyond to advance our common interests and values.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Address at Warsaw University
June 15, 2001

Thank you very much. Mr. President, thank you very much for your gracious hospitality that you and your wife have shown Laura and me. Mr. Prime Minister, members of the government, distinguished members of the clergy, distinguished citizens in this important friend of America, students, Mr. Rector, thank you very much for your warm greeting.

It's a great honor for me to visit this great city, a city that breathes with confidence, creativity, and the success of modern Poland. Like all nations, Poland still faces challenges, but I am confident you'll meet them with the same optimistic spirit a visitor feels on Warsaw's streets and sees in the city's fast-changing skyline.

We find evidence of this energy and enterprise surrounding us right now in this magnificent building. And you can hear it in the air. Today's own—Poland's orchestra called Golec's—[*laughter*]—is telling the world, "On that wheatfield, I'm gonna build my San Francisco; over that molehill, I'm gonna build my bank." [*Laughter*] Americans recognize that kind of optimism and ambition because we share it.

We are linked to Poland by culture and heritage, kinship and common values. Polish glassmakers built and operated the New World's first factory in Jamestown, Virginia, in 1608. Seeking the right to vote, those same Poles also staged the New World's

first labor strike; they succeeded. [*Laughter*] It seems the Poles have been keeping the world honest for a long period of time.

Some of the most courageous moments of the 20th century took place in this nation. Here, in 1943, the world saw the heroic effort and revolt of the Warsaw Ghetto, a year later the 63 days of the Warsaw Uprising, and then the reduction of this city to rubble because it chose to resist evil. Here communism was humbled by the largest citizens' movement in history and by the iron purpose and moral vision of a single man, Pope John Paul II. Here Polish workers, led by an electrician from Gdansk, made the sparks that would electrify half a continent. Poland revealed to the world that its Soviet rulers, however brutal and powerful, were ultimately defenseless against determined men and women armed only with their conscience and their faith. Here you have proven that communism need not be followed by chaos, that great oppression can end in true reconciliation, and that the promise of freedom is stronger than the habit of fear. In all these events, we have seen the character of the Polish people and the hand of God in your history.

Modern Poland is just beginning to contribute to the wealth of Europe. Yet, for decades, you have contributed to Europe's soul and spiritual strength, and all who believe in the power of conscience and culture are in your debt.

Today I have come to the center of Europe to speak of the future of Europe. Some still call this the East, but Warsaw is closer to Ireland than it is to the Urals. And it is time to put talk of East and West behind us.

Yalta did not ratify a natural divide; it divided a living civilization. The partition of Europe was not a fact of geography; it was an act of violence. And wise leaders for decades have found the hope of European peace in the hope of greater unity. In the same speech that described an Iron Curtain, Winston Churchill called for "a new unity in Europe from which no nation should be permanently outcast."

Consider how far we have come since that speech. Through trenches and shellfire, through death camps and bombed-out cities, through gulags and food lines, men and women have dreamed of what my father called a Europe whole and free. This free Europe is no longer a dream. It is the Europe that is rising around us. It is the work that you and I are called on to complete. We can build an open Europe, a Europe without Hitler and Stalin, without Brezhnev and Honecker and Ceauşescu and, yes, without Milosevic.

Our goal is to erase the false lines that have divided Europe for too long. The future of every European nation must be determined by the progress of internal reform, not the interests of outside powers. Every European nation that struggles toward democracy and free markets and a strong civic culture must be welcomed into Europe's home.

All of Europe's new democracies, from the Baltic to the Black Sea and all that lie between, should have the same chance for security and freedom—and the same chance to join the institutions of Europe—as Europe's old democracies have.

I believe in NATO membership for all of Europe's democracies that seek it and are ready to share the responsibility that NATO brings. The question of when may still be up for debate within NATO; the question of whether should not be. As we plan to enlarge NATO, no nation should be used as a pawn in the agendas of others. We will not trade away the fate of free European peoples: No more Munichs; no more Yaltas. Let us tell all those who have struggled to build democracy and free markets what we have told the Poles: "From now on, what you build, you keep. No one can take away your freedom or your country."

Next year NATO's leaders will meet in Prague. The United States will be prepared to make concrete, historic decisions with

its Allies to advance NATO enlargement. Poland and America share a vision. As we plan the Prague summit, we should not calculate how little we can get away with but how much we can do to advance the cause of freedom. The expansion of NATO has fulfilled NATO's promise, and that promise now leads eastward and southward, northward and onward.

I want to thank Poland for acting as a bridge to the new democracies of Europe and a champion of the interests and security of your neighbors, such as the Baltic States, Ukraine, Slovakia. You are making real the words "For your freedom and ours."

All nations should understand that there is no conflict between membership in NATO and membership in the European Union. My Nation welcomes the consolidation of European unity and the stability it brings. We welcome a greater role for the EU in European security, properly integrated with NATO. We welcome the incentive for reform that the hope of EU membership creates. We welcome a Europe that is truly united, truly democratic, and truly diverse, a collection of peoples and nations bound together in purpose and respect and faithful to their own roots.

The most basic commitments of NATO and the European Union are similar: democracy, free markets, and common security. And all in Europe and America understand the central lesson of the century past: When Europe and America are divided, history tends to tragedy; when Europe and America are partners, no trouble or tyranny can stand against us.

Our vision of Europe must also include the Balkans. Unlike the people of Poland, many people and leaders in Southeast Europe made the wrong choices in the last decade. There, communism fell, but dictators exploited a murderous nationalism to cling to power and to conquer new land. Twice NATO had to intervene militarily to stop the killing and defend the values that define a new Europe.

Today, instability remains, and there are still those who seek to undermine the fragile peace that holds. We condemn those, like the sponsors of violence in Macedonia, who seek to subvert democracy. But we've made progress. We see democratic change in Zagreb and Belgrade, moderate governments in Bosnia, multiethnic police in Kosovo, the end to violence in southern Serbia. For the first time in history, all governments in the region are democratic, committed to cooperating with one another, and predisposed to join Europe.

Across the region, nations are yearning to be a part of Europe. The burdens and benefits of satisfying that yearning will naturally fall most heavily on Europe itself. That is why I welcome Europe's commitment to play a leading role in the stabilization of Southeastern Europe. Countries other than the United States already provide over 80 percent of the NATO-led forces in the region. But I know that America's role is important, and we will meet our obligations. We went into the Balkans together, and we will come out together. And our goal must be to hasten the arrival of that day.

The Europe we are building must include Ukraine, a nation struggling with the trauma of transition. Some in Kiev speak of their country's European destiny. If this is their aspiration, we should reward it. We must extend our hand to Ukraine, as Poland has already done with such determination.

The Europe we are building must also be open to Russia. We have a stake in Russia's success, and we look for the day when Russia is fully reformed, fully democratic, and closely bound to the rest of Europe. Europe's great institutions, NATO and the European Union, can and should build partnerships with Russia and with all the countries that have emerged from the wreckage of the former Soviet Union.

Tomorrow I will see President Putin and express my hopes for a Russia that is truly great, a greatness measured by the strength

of its democracy, the good treatment of minorities, and the achievements of its people. I will express to President Putin that Russia is a part of Europe and, therefore, does not need a buffer zone of insecure states separating it from Europe. NATO, even as it grows, is no enemy of Russia. Poland is no enemy of Russia. America is no enemy of Russia.

We will seek a constructive relationship with Russia for the benefit of all our peoples. I will make the case, as I have to all the European leaders I have met on this trip, that the basis for our mutual security must move beyond cold war doctrines. Today, we face growing threats from weapons of mass destruction and missiles in the hands of states for whom terror and blackmail are a way of life. So we must have a broad strategy of active nonproliferation, counterproliferation, and a new concept of deterrence that includes defenses sufficient to protect our people, our forces, and our Allies, as well as reduced reliance on nuclear weapons.

And finally, I'll make clear to President Putin that the path to greater prosperity and greater security lies in greater freedom. The 20th century has taught us that only freedom gets the highest service from every citizen—citizens who can publish, citizens who can worship, citizens who can organize for themselves, without fear of intimidation and with the full protection of the law.

This, after all, is the true source of European unity. Ultimately, it's more than the unity of markets; it is more than the unity of interests; it is a unity of values. Through a hard history with all its precedents of pain, Europe has come to believe in the dignity of every individual, in social freedom tempered by moral restraint, in economic liberty balanced with humane values.

"The revolutions of 1989," said Pope John Paul II, "were made possible by the commitment of brave men and women inspired by a different, and ultimately more profound and powerful, vision, the vision of man as a creature of intelligence and free will, immersed in a mystery which transcends his own being and endowed with the ability to reflect and the ability to choose and thus capable of wisdom and virtue."

This belief successfully challenged communism. It challenges materialism in all its forms. Just as man cannot be reduced to a means of production, he must find goals greater than mere consumption. The European ideal is inconsistent with a life defined by gain and greed and the lonely pursuit of self. It calls for consideration and respect, compassion and forgiveness, the habits of character on which the exercise of freedom depends. And all these duties and all these rights are ultimately traced to a source of law and justice above our wills and beyond our politics, an author of dignity who calls us to act worthy of our dignity.

This belief is more than a memory; it is a living faith. And it is the main reason Europe and America will never be separated. We are products of the same history, reaching from Jerusalem and Athens to Warsaw and Washington. We share more than an alliance; we share a civilization. Its values are universal, and they pervade our history and our partnership in a unique way. These transatlantic ties could not be severed by U-boats. They could not be cut by checkpoints and barbed wire. They were not ended by SS–20s and nuclear blackmail. And they certainly will not be broken by commercial quarrels and political debates. America will not permit it. Poland will not allow it.

This unity of values and aspiration calls us to new tasks. Those who have benefited and prospered most from the commitment to freedom and openness have an obligation to help others that are seeking their way along that path. That is why our transatlantic community must have priorities beyond the consolidation of European peace.

We must bring peace and health to Africa, a neighbor to Europe, a heritage to many Americans, a continent in crisis, and

a place of enormous potential. We must work together to shut down the arms trafficking that fuels Africa's wars, fight the spread of AIDS that may make 40 million children into orphans, and help all of Africa share in the trade and promise of the modern world.

We must work toward a world that trades in freedom, a world where prosperity is available to all through the power of markets, a world where open trade spurs the process of economic and legal reform, a world of cooperation to enhance prosperity, protect the environment, and lift the quality of life for all.

We must confront the shared security threats of regimes that thrive by creating instability, that are ambitious for weapons of mass destruction, and are dangerously unpredictable. In Europe, you're closer to these challenges than the United States. You see the lightning well before we hear the thunder. Only together, however, can we confront the emerging threats of a changing world.

Fifty years ago, all Europe looked to the United States for help. Ten years ago, Poland did, as well. Now, we and others can only go forward together. The question no longer is what others can do for Poland but what America and Poland and all of Europe can do for the rest of the world.

In the early 1940s, Winston Churchill saw beyond a World War and a cold war to a greater project: "Let the great cities of Warsaw and Prague and Vienna banish despair even in the midst of their agony," he said. "Their liberation is sure. The day will come when the joy bells will ring again throughout Europe and when victorious nations, masters not only of their foes but of themselves, will plan and build in justice, in tradition, and in freedom a house of many mansions where there will be room for all." To his contemporaries who lived in a Europe of division and violence, this vision must have seemed unimaginable. Yet, our fathers, yours and mine, struggled and sacrificed to make this vision real. Now it is within our grasp.

Today, a new generation makes a new commitment, a Europe and an America bound in a great alliance of liberty, history's greatest united force for peace and progress and human dignity. The bells of victory have rung. The Iron Curtain is no more. Now we plan and build a house of freedom, whose doors are open to all of Europe's peoples and whose windows look out to global challenges beyond. Our progress is great; our goals are large; and our differences, in comparison, are small. And America, in calm and in crisis, will honor this vision and the values we share.

Poland, in so many ways, is a symbol of renewal and common purpose. More than half a century ago, from this spot, all one could see was a desert of ruins. Hardly did a single unbroken brick touch another. This city had been razed by the Nazis and betrayed by the Soviets. Its people were mostly displaced. Not far from here is the only monument which survived. It is the figure of Christ falling under the cross and struggling to rise. Under him are written the words *"Sursum corda,"* "Lift up your hearts." From the determination in Polish hearts, Warsaw did rise again, brick by brick. Poland has regained its rightful place at the heart of a new Europe and is helping other nations to find their own.

"Lift up your hearts" is the story of Poland. "Lift up your hearts" is the story of a new Europe. And together, let us raise this hope of freedom for all who seek it in our world.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:45 p.m. in the library. In his remarks, he referred to President Aleksander Kwasniewski and Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek of Poland; Jolanta Kwasniewska, wife of President Kwasniewski; Piotr Wegielski, rector, Warsaw University; Lech Walesa, former President of Poland and Solidarity movement

leader; and President Vladimir Putin of Russia.

Remarks at a State Dinner Hosted by President Aleksander Kwasniewski of Poland in Warsaw
June 15, 2001

Mr. President and Madam Kwasniewski, Mr. Prime Minister and Madam Buzek, distinguished guests, many of whom sacrificed for freedom. Laura and I are grateful for this great day—it's been a great day in Poland—and for this good company. You've made us feel most welcome.

I bring with me the affectionate greetings of the American people. Poland has a special place in our hearts, not just in places like Panna Maria, Texas, or Warsaw, Alabama, or Pulaski, Tennessee. Americans understand that we owe a lot to Poland. It has even been claimed that the old Polish game—an old Polish game was the earliest inspiration for baseball. [*Laughter*] If that's true, I owe more than most. [*Laughter*]

Today, our friendship is based upon a shared heritage and a hope for the future. When my father came to Warsaw in 1989, he declared that the cold war that began in Poland could end in Poland. Poles won their freedom with courage and determination. Americans from President Reagan to President Bush to President Clinton walked alongside you. Hope became reality. And Poland knows that when that happened, the world turned right side up. Poland became a mature democracy. Long a friend to America, we now proudly call you Ally. Yours is a moving story, and only you will ever know how difficult it was to write.

Mr. President, the United States greatly admires the leadership you have demonstrated these past 6 years. You understand that building a better future sometimes entails coming to grips with the past, even if that past is uncomfortable to some. America understands the value of reconciliation, of overcoming old divisions. History looks well upon such leadership.

Mr. Prime Minister, the United States is deeply appreciative of your service to your country and to the cause of freedom. You understand that building a better future requires hard choices. The reformer is rarely rewarded and often criticized but then moves ahead with reform, nonetheless. History is kind to this type of leader, as well.

This week I've spoken to many leaders from across Europe about the challenges of unity and open commerce and peace. I am here today because America is convinced that we can meet those challenges in partnership with a strong and free Poland. We know we can count on Poland to remain true to its best traditions of tolerance, compromise, and determination that have brought you so far and so fast.

We know we can count on Poland to keep reaching out to its neighbors, showing them the way and helping them help themselves. We know we can count on Poland to continue its reforms. And Poland can count on America. We are in Europe to stay, because we know the danger of retreating behind the false security of an ocean.

Together, our countries know what faith, commitment, and integrity can build. Our partnership is going to last a long time, always mindful of where we have been; always moving forward to build the future we know we want, the future we know we can achieve.

My toast is for a free Poland, its leadership, and the courageous souls who made it happen.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:50 p.m. at the Presidential Palace. In his remarks, he referred to Jolanta Kwasniewska, wife of President Aleksander Kwasniewski, and Ludgarda Buzek, wife of Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek.

The President's Radio Address
June 16, 2001

The First Lady. Good morning. This weekend millions of Americans will celebrate Father's Day. On this day sons and daughters pause to reflect on all the ways in which our fathers and grandfathers contribute to our lives, with ball games and Band-Aids, advice and sacrifice, patience and strength. Words fall short when we attempt to describe the full extent of our love and appreciation for them, when we try to express our gratitude for everything they do for us.

The fortunate among us know that we can always rely on a dad or a granddad. Sadly, there are those whose lives aren't touched by the loving hand of a father. I hope they, too, find a way to observe this day with a caring role model or other family members.

I am blessed to have many fond memories of my father. I remember fun trips together when I was a child, bumping along the dusty roads of west Texas in our car, heading for El Paso, where my grandmother lived.

My dad once said that when my mother brought him home to meet her parents for the first time, my grandmother was laying brick when they arrived. My dad thought he had married into a family whose women could do anything, and he made me believe that I could be anything.

Whether our fathers live one room away, a plane flight away, or years away in the twilight of our memories, we remember them as we commemorate Father's Day. It's a day to acknowledge all the spoken words and unspoken kindnesses that fathers and grandfathers have shown us through the years.

So thank you for your strength, your love, and your support for your children. Happy Father's Day to all of you. And I want to wish a happy Father's Day to the father of my children: Happy Father's Day, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you, Laura.

Many Americans believe that their father is the finest man they have ever known. That's certainly true in my case. My dad provided me with life's greatest gift, unconditional love. And he still makes sure all his children know how much he loves us.

Fathers are so important in the lives of children: They provide love and encouragement; they are the object of a young child's admiration; and they provide their sons and daughters with an example of what it means to be a good man. When fathers are absent, children are often lost to a world of hopelessness and hardship. Our laws should promote responsible fatherhood.

And so our administration strongly supports community-based fatherhood programs. We are taking steps to make adoption more affordable. And for innocent children who are born into fractured families, we provide support for mentoring programs.

Ultimately, fatherhood is a deeply personal calling. Our own children are given to our care, and they depend on our love.

Every parent knows that raising a child is among the most hopeful and affirming experiences a human being will ever know.

So many of my generation had the same experience I did. When we held our children for the first time, we found ourselves. We found a world of duty and love that changed our lives. And since that day, "Dad" has been the most important title I have ever held or will ever hold.

Laura and I wish all the fathers listening a happy Father's Day. So many of you provide to your children daily care and guidance, nurture and protection, discipline and love, and it's making a world of difference. On behalf of them, we want to express our appreciation.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 3:30 p.m. on June 11 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on June 16. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 15 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Janez Drnovsek of Slovenia in Kranj, Slovenia
June 16, 2001

The President. [*Inaudible*]—the Prime Minister came to Austin to visit me when I was the Governor of Texas, along with then-Ambassador, now the Foreign Minister. We had a wonderful visit then, and I'm looking forward to a great exchange now. We had a good visit in the car coming here. And I'm so grateful for his hospitality to this most spectacular and beautiful country. It's really beautiful.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1 p.m. at Brdo Castle. In his remarks, he referred to Minister of Foreign Affairs Dimitrij Rupel of Slovenia. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Vladimir Putin of Russia in Kranj
June 16, 2001

Q. Mr. President, any thoughts about this first meeting?

President Putin. First impression? It was a good first impression.

President Bush. I rest my case. [*Laughter*] We're going to have a very good meeting, and I've been looking forward to this for a long period of time. We find we have a lot in common, and I'm so honored the President came here. I know it's inconvenient to travel such a long distance, Mr. President——

President Putin. We know about the very latest statements of President Bush in Warsaw, and that's a very good foundation for us to proceed.

President Bush. Thank you all.

NOTE: The exchange began at 2:45 p.m. at Brdo Castle. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

The President's News Conference With President Vladimir Putin of Russia in Kranj
June 16, 2001

President Bush. Good afternoon. President Putin and I have just concluded 2 hours of straightforward and productive meetings. We had a good discussion of our views of Russian-American relations and of the changing world at the beginnings of this new century. Our countries have common interests, and we share great responsibilities.

My meeting with President Putin today is an important step in building a constructive, respectful relationship with Russia, a relationship that has the potential to benefit not only our two countries but also the world. Russia is an important country with vast potential. When Russia and the United States work together in a constructive way, we can make the world a safer and more prosperous place.

I enjoyed the opportunity to meet President Putin in person for the first time. I am convinced that he and I can build a relationship of mutual respect and candor. And I'm convinced that it's important for the world that we do so.

More than a decade after the cold war ended, it is time to move beyond suspicion and toward straight talk, beyond mutually assured destruction and toward mutually earned respect. As we work together to address the world as it is, not as it used to be, it is important that we not only talk differently; we also must act differently.

We have great opportunities to cooperate on economic, commercial, regional, and security issues. President Putin and I have agreed to launch an extensive dialog about a wide range of issues that we can constructively address together.

We also discussed the importance of sound investment climate to improve Russia's future economic prosperity. I was so impressed that he was able to simplify his tax code in Russia with a flat tax. I'm not so sure I'll have the same success with our Congress.

We must continue a dialog, so I'm prepared to send both Secretary O'Neill and Secretary Evans to Moscow soon to further our discussions. I want to encourage Russian and American businesses to become more involved in our discussions, so that together, we can foster meaningful investments. President Putin agrees with this approach.

And we've agreed to launch regular detailed and serious consultations on the nature of our security relationship. I said to President Putin that we need a new approach for a new era, an approach that protects both our peoples and strengthens deterrence by exploring and developing our new attitudes toward defenses and missile defenses. I've directed Secretary of State Powell and Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld to work with their Russian counterparts to begin discussing a new security framework. I have invited President Putin to Washington this fall; he accepted. He invited me to Russia, and I accepted, and I look forward to the visit.

We also agreed to continue our cooperation and work toward common solutions on important regional issues, from the Balkans to Nagorno-Karabakh to Afghanistan. And we discussed our common interest in developing the energy resources of the Caspian Basin in a way that benefits all the countries of the region.

Respectful relations require honesty. And we did discuss areas where my country has differences with Russia, over Chechnya and over media relations. I also expressed my hope that Russia will develop constructive relations with its neighbors, like Georgia, that are trying to find their own way in a challenging but hopeful world.

This was a very good meeting. And I look forward to my next meeting with President Putin in July. I very much enjoyed our time together. He's an honest, straightforward man who loves his country. He loves his family. We share a lot of values. I view him as a remarkable leader. I believe his leadership will serve Russia well. Russia and America have the opportunity to accomplish much together; we should seize it. And today we have begun.

And finally, I'm especially pleased we're able to have this meeting in Slovenia, one of the success stories of Southeast Europe. In my meetings today with the President and the Prime Minister, I reaffirmed America's support for Slovenia's integration with Europe and the Euro-Atlantic community. I especially thank the people of Slovenia, and I want to thank the leadership for such warm hospitality and congratulate the people on the 10th anniversary of its independence on June the 25th.

I only regret not staying long enough to see Lake Bled or to climb Mount Triglav. Who knows, maybe I'll have the opportunity down the road.

Mr. President.

President Putin. First of all, I wanted to confirm everything that's been said by President Bush when he characterized our meeting. I could even add that I was counting on an open, frank dialog, confidential dialog. But in this regard, as they say in cases like this, reality was a lot bigger than expectations, because this was not only a confidential discussion but extremely and all the way to more than what you could expect from frankness, because President Bush, as a person who has studied history, proposed a very global, wide-scale approach and view to history. And it was very interesting and positive.

We sat, talked about the past, about the present, about the future of our countries and about the development of the situation in the world for many years into the future. This was really a very interesting discussion. I think that we found a good basis to start building on our cooperation. We're counting on a pragmatic relationship between Russia and the United States. We compared our approaches in key areas, and once again, we established our common ground.

I want to return now to what the President said very recently, that Russia and the United States are not enemies, they do not threaten each other, and they could be fully good allies. And taking into account the fact that the United States and the Russian Federation—as no one else, as no other country of the world—have accumulated huge amounts of nuclear weapons, weapons of mass destruction, we bear a special responsibility for maintaining the common peace and security in the world, for building a new architecture of security in the world.

All of this presupposes a very close cooperation for strengthening security in the 21st century. And saying this, any unilateral actions can only make more complicated various problems and issues.

One of the central topics of our discussion was the strengthening of strategic stability. We exchanged our views on our approaches. It was very important for me to hear how and what the President of the United States thinks and to hear directly from him.

In turn, naturally, I expressed the approaches of Russia in this sphere. The differences in approaches do exist, and naturally, in one short moment, it's impossible to overcome all of them. But I am convinced that ahead of us we have a constructive dialog and the will to talk about these topics, to discuss, to hear, to listen—to listen and to hear each other. And to my mind, this is very important.

The President and I have agreed that we're going to tell our Ministers of Defense, Secretaries of Defense, Foreign Ministers, to continue in this vein, to continue this discussion without any pauses.

Of course, we discussed some very difficult regional issues, the Near East and

Afghanistan and the Balkans. I have to say that this discussion showed that the differences in our approaches in the very fundamental areas are much less than that which unites us. The differences in our positions, positions of the two countries, really are not of a fundamental nature, a global nature, something which cannot be solved—not at all. I think that it would be very incorrect for us to start forcing out issues and arguments and not take into account the very fundamental, main concepts and issues in our relationships, which are the basis and the whole foundation of the relationship between the Russian Federation and the United States of America.

The President and I are united in saying that the economic ties between our two countries do not correspond to the potential of our two countries. The Government of the Russian Federation, businessmen of both countries, and the U.S. administration, of course, can do a lot more to support the effectiveness of our economic ties. And the President expressed that we need an additional impulse from our businessmen, that we will do everything possible to receive a very high-level business delegation of the United States to Russia, moreover, especially if it is headed by one of the senior officials of the U.S. administration.

Here there are a lot of very specific issues. We talked about energy resources; we talked about using the Caspian Basin. You know, very soon the new pipeline system is going to go into effect, which is going to be transporting energy resources from the Caspian region through *novie russkies*. And this is a joint project of two companies, Russian and American companies. I'm sure that this will not be the last such project.

I want to stress here that the issues that were discussed at Ljubljana are going to be the subject of our continuing dialog. And we really, in fact, did agree that we're going to talk in Genoa; we're going to talk in Shanghai at the APEC Conference. And I'm very grateful to the President of the United States for inviting me to the United States. I would do it with great pleasure, especially because he invited to have me over at his ranch. And I'm going to receive him in my own home, not just in Russia but in my own home.

And the last, in the last few months, and at the very threshold of our meeting, there was a lot of discussion about the fact that U.S.-Russian relations are overburdened by problems and issues that are somehow reaching a critical stage. I think the very nature and the result of our discussion today between myself and the President of the United States will put an end to all of these rumors. We see very clearly a very positive prospect of our relationship in the future. And we are all geared up to work in the future constructively, pragmatically, and to establish very good, predictable relationship.

And of course, I cannot but say the very highest about the hospitality of our hosts, who provided us with all the conditions necessary for holding this very good meeting—good, moral atmosphere.

Thank you. Thank you ever so much.

Moderator. Dear colleagues, we have said that we're going to give the first opportunity to ask a question to journalists from Slovenia, please.

[*At this point, a question was asked, and an English translation was not provided.*]

President Bush. I don't think the interpreter could have done it in English, but anyway, go ahead.

NATO Enlargement

Q. On the next summit in Prague, where, according to Lord Robertson, enlargement will happen, and what is the Russian position on enlargement?

President Bush. I went to my first NATO summit, and there appears to be a uniform desire to expand NATO. This is certainly the position of my country. But as I reminded the leaders today, that there is a

process, and the countries must work toward that process. I am impressed by the progress being made in this country, and we will take that under consideration when we meet in Prague a year from this fall.

The Balkans

Q. A question for you, Mr. Putin. You're leaving from Slovenia, straight to Belgrade. Do you have any concrete solutions for the Balkan crisis?

President Putin. As I understand you, what you have in mind is the situation in the region.

Yes, it's working. It's working. It's good to have dealings with effective people that make things work.

As I understand it, what you have in mind is the overall situation in the Balkans, right? Macedonia, Kosovo, et cetera, right? Well, we do have our own idea, vision of what's happening here and how we should act.

Today we did discuss with the President of the United States, Mr. Bush. The most important things that we have to really pay attention to is to put an effective block, an end to any kind of extremism and feelings of intolerance—religious intolerance. People who are trying to solve, no matter how complex an issue of national or ethnic or religious conflict—weapons simply are not those kinds of things which can solve these problems.

In some of the countries of the former Soviet Union, for instance—you probably know, we talk about this very often—in the Baltic States, for instance, we feel that human rights are damaged, especially of the ethnic Russian populations. In Latvia, for instance, 40 percent of the population is Russian-speaking, a huge number of noncitizens—in other words, people who can't even get citizenship. We don't send weapons there. We don't support those people. We don't call it terrorism. We don't try to get people to rise up on the basis of national or ethnic origin or religious feelings. We don't encourage people to take up arms to fight against that.

I stress against, and I insist that people who try to do this do not deserve the support of the international community. But on the contrary, the international community must say once and for all, everybody who does this will receive due answer. These things can only be solved through negotiations. This is a very difficult process. It requires patience, but there is no other way.

National Missile Defense/Nuclear Proliferation

Q. A question to both of you, if I may. President Putin, President Bush has said that he's going to go forward with his missile defense plans basically with or without your blessing. Are you unyielding in your opposition to his missile defense plan? Is there anything you can do to stop it?

And to President Bush, did President Putin ease your concern at all about the spread of nuclear technologies by Russia, and is this a man that Americans can trust?

President Bush. Yes. Do you want to go first?

President Putin. Now, as far as the issue of antimissile defense, the official position of the Russian Government is known. I don't think we need to spend time to, yet again, declare it. We proceed from the idea that the 1972 ABM Treaty is the cornerstone of the modern architecture of international security. We proceed from the premise that there are elements which unite us with our partners in the United States.

When we hear about things like concerns of the future and about threats from the future, we do agree that together, we have to sit down and have a good think about this. But we proceed from the idea that these concerns and threats are different kinds of things. Threats have to be defined. We have to look at where they come from and then make some decisions as to how we have to counter them.

We feel that we can do it best together. Based upon today's dialog, I've come to the conclusion, and the impression, that we might have a very constructive development here in this arena; at least the President of the United States listened carefully. He listens to our arguments very carefully. But I think the specialists, as I have said before, have to sit down, have contact to identify the overall platform that we're going to work from, and try to find a way together to solve these problems.

Now, as far as the issues of proliferation and nonproliferation, I have to say that in our opinion, this is a topic that's very, very closely tied to the ABM Treaty because many other things are hooked onto this same string. And many threshold states, when it comes to the destruction of a previous accord, can only be happy and say, "Look, fantastic. Yesterday, we were threshold. Nobody agreed—nobody took any account of us—now, today, recognize us." This is a problem we're going to have to really think very hard about.

Can we trust Russia? I'm not going to answer to that. I could ask the very same question.

President Bush. I found him to be very straightforward and trustworthy. We had a very good dialog. I was able to get a sense of his soul, a man deeply committed to his country and the best interests of his country. And I appreciated so very much the frank dialog. There was no kind of diplomatic chitchat, trying to throw each other off balance. There was a straightforward dialog. And that's the beginning of a very constructive relationship. I wouldn't have invited him to my ranch if I didn't trust him. [*Laughter*]

Secondly, I appreciate the opportunity to be able to talk about a new relationship, and we will continue these dialogs. The basis for my discussion began with this simple premise, that Russia and the United States must establish a new relationship beyond that of the old cold war mentality. The cold war said loud and clear that we're opponents and that we bring the peace through the ability for each of us to destroy each other. Friends don't destroy each other. People who cooperate do not have a basis of peace on destruction.

Our nations are confronted with new threats in the 21st century. Terror in the hands of what we call rogue nations is a threat. I expressed my concern—and so did the President—very openly, about nations on his border and nations that can't stand America's freedoms developing the capacity to hold each of us hostage; and he agreed. I brought up concerns about Iran. And I'm hesitant to put words in the President's mouth, but he said he's concerned, as well—I think that accurately categorizes your position—and we'll work together to stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction. And I believe as we go down the road that we'll be able to develop a constructive relationship as to how to use our technologies and research and willingness to keep the peace, in a way that makes the world more peaceful.

I was so pleased that we were able to begin constructive, real dialog between our Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld and Mr. Andrei Ivanov. These will be fruitful discussions, and I believe what people will see is a strategy, a joint strategy. The President's a history major, and so am I. And we remember the old history. It's time to write new history, in a positive and constructive way.

NATO Expansion

Q. This is a question to both Presidents, if you allow. Mr. Bush, you partially answered—you talked about issues of strategic security; you talked about the future. In this connection, could you tell us anything about what you talked about the expansion of NATO? Thank you.

President Bush. [*Inaudible*]—to expand, so long as nations met their obligations and fulfilled their—met what's called the MAP process. I said yesterday in Poland, I felt like a secure border for Russia, a border

with safe and friendly nations, is positive. And I expressed my Government's position very plainly. And the President, of course, had a reaction, which I'm sure he'll give you right now.

I thought he was going to give it to you right now. [*Laughter*]

President Putin. Yes, I'm going to lay it out for you. I'm going to lay it out for you. Look, I'm going to read to you something which was recently declassified. Speaking for myself—look, this was printed a while back, but there's a document—attached addendum documents which were secret. "Copy declassified"—it was top secret. Look, here it is. This is a note of the Soviet Government from 1954, sent to the countries of NATO. Here's what it says: "The leadership, holding to its inalienable policy and taking into account all the tensions, the Soviet Government announces its intention to enter into discussions with NATO countries about its participation in NATO, with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization."

And this was the answer—look, here's the answer: The Soviet Government proposed—they were talking about the widening of the NATO pact and what they're going to do about bringing the Soviet Union in. "There is no need to stress the completely unrealistic nature of such a proposal from the Soviet Union." That's the answer that NATO gave.

So what we're talking about here, you remember about a year ago, I think, somebody asked a question about, "What's your attitude? Is it possible that Russia is going to join in NATO or not?" I said, "Why not?" And right away, Mrs. Albright, former Secretary of State—she was someplace on a trip to Europe—she said, "Look, we're not talking about this right now."

Look, you understand that our attitude toward NATO is not was one toward an enemy organization; of course not. And I'm very grateful to the President of the United States that finally, from the territory of the United States, these words were heard. This is very important for us; we value this. When a President of a great power says that he wants to see Russia as a partner and maybe even as an ally, this is worth so much to us.

But if that's the case, then, look, we ask ourselves a question: Look, this is a military organization? Yes, it's military. They don't want us there? They don't want us there. It's moving towards our border? Yes, it's moving towards our border. Why?

So this is the foundation of all our concerns, not just to bring it in or not bring it in, or accept NATO or not accept NATO. Look, the positive feeling that we now have developed today with President Bush—this could be a separate subject of discussion because, you know, Russia is cooperating with NATO. We have an agreement; we have association; we have various accords and treaties; there's the JPC. And there's no need to fire up this whole situation.

National Missile Defense/Russia-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, did you offer President Putin any inducements in this conversation to ease his opposition to a U.S. missile defense plan?

And President Putin, to follow up on your comments just now, does the simple fact of President Bush saying that Russia is not an enemy actually change your strategic or military planning?

President Bush. I offered something: logic and a hopeful tomorrow. I offered the opportunity, which the President is going to seize, for us, as leaders of great powers, to work together.

We have a unique opportunity to address the true threats of the 21st century together. We have a great moment during our tenures to cast aside the suspicions and doubts that used to plague our nations. And I'm committed to do so.

I said in Poland, and I'll say it again: Russia is not the enemy of the United States. As a matter of fact, after our meeting today, I'm convinced it can be a strong

partner and friend, more so than people could imagine.

The leader of Russia is working hard on behalf of his people to promote prosperity and peace. And I believe our nations can work together to achieve prosperity and peace, not only within our respective countries but around the world. I believe that.

And so we didn't have a bargaining session. We had a session of two men who have come to office for the right purpose, not only to represent our countries but given our standing, our respective standings, to work together to deal with the threats of the 21st century. A threat of the 21st century is energy; a threat of the 21st century is poverty; a threat of the 21st century is the spread of weapons of mass destruction. And as the President said to me clearly, he said that "You're not the only nation that cares about weapons of mass destruction; we care." And we have an opportunity to do that. We have an opportunity to reject extremists that could threaten our respective nations and respect our—and threaten our alliances. And we will do so—we will do so.

And today has been a very constructive day. Everybody is trying to read body language. Mark me down as very pleased with the progress and the frank discussion. We will meet again in July, then later in the fall. Then we'll have the great Crawford, Texas, summit. And I believe that people who watch carefully our relationship will see that it grows and emerges. It starts with trust. Ron [Ron Fournier, Associated Press] asked a great question: Can I trust him? And I can. And from that basis we can begin a very fruitful relationship.

Q. So there were no specific—that you offered in this meeting, just logic?

President Bush. We did not—well, first of all, our relationship is larger than just security relationships. It's bigger than figuring out how to deal with the ABM Treaty; it's much bigger than that. It deals with two leaders who share values.

The President told me something very interesting. He said, "I read where you named your daughters after your mother and your mother-in-law." And I said, "Yes, I'm a great diplomat, aren't I?" [*Laughter*] And he said, "I did the same thing." [*Laughter*] I said, "Mr. President, you're a fine diplomat, as well." We share our love for our families. We've got common interests. And from that basis we will seize the moment to make a difference in the world. That's why he ran for the Presidency, and it's why I ran for the Presidency.

This is not a bargaining session. The President didn't say, "You know, if you do this, I'll do that." It's bigger than that. It's a bigger relationship than that, and it's important to understand that.

Q. Question on whether the simple fact of President Bush saying that you are no longer—the United States is not your enemy actually changes your military thinking or your strategic thinking and planning?

President Putin. This is not a question; I think this has become an interview. [*Laughter*] But look, nonetheless, I'll respond. It's not by accident that I said that's it's important for us. And it seems to me that if you start with a mutual understanding that we are partners, that's the way we're going to move to try to solve this very important issue.

Look, we didn't just sit down and say that our specialists are going to meet and they're going to have an exchange of views. But we agreed that they're going to discuss very specific questions which cause concern to both sides, very specific items. I'm not prepared right now to get into this publicly, but we're talking about specifics.

Moreover, I have to say that between Russia and the United States, we have two protocols that we've signed on nonstrategic ABM systems, in New York and I think it was in Helsinki. And this, too, is a subject of very special review. I think the specialists should define all these things. Again, I define—I repeat—define the threats and

those things which just stand in the way; to look at the power that both countries have to neutralize these threats. I think we can work out a common approach.

Russia-U.S. Economic Ties

Q. To both Presidents, if you allow: Getting back to trade and economic issues, ties between our two countries, how soon do you think we can expect a delegation of American businessmen to Moscow? And do you have any plans on creating an intergovernmental commission of various agencies, which could stimulate economic ties between the United States and Russia? Thank you.

President Bush. I'll talk to the Secretary of Commerce as soon as I get back and tell him of our agreement and get him moving. Sometimes I worry a little bit about commissions. If commissions exist just to exist, then I don't think it's fruitful. If commissions exist in order to stimulate action, then perhaps.

Let me say one other area where the United States is in agreement with Russia. We think Russia ought to be admitted into the World Trade Organization. And we'll work toward that end. The Russian President has expressed a desire to join the WTO, and I think it makes sense. I think that will help a lot.

And there's a lot of areas in our business relationships. I reminded the President that oftentimes people speak in terms of—they say Russia is a country of great resources, only referring to the energy resources, the mining resources, the timber resources. That's true. But Russia has got a resource that's invaluable in this new era, and that's brainpower. Russia's got great mathematicians and engineers who can just as easily participate in the high-tech world as American engineers and American mathematicians. And that's an area of great interest to me, and it's an area of great interest to the President. It's an area where we can begin a fruitful dialog.

The deployment of capital is something that's very important to Russia; it's important to our businessmen. The President understands it's important to have rule of law, a reasonable tax system, transparency in the economy. And he's working toward that, and I am grateful. Our businessmen and our Secretary of Commerce will hear that when they travel to Russia.

President Putin. You know, I agree with the President in that to overload our relationship by a variety of bureaucratic structures and organizations, that's not always justified. The most important thing is to create favorable conditions for effective work by the business community. We know the plans of President Bush with respect to his taxation policy and with respect to other measures which he is planning, with respect to the economy of the United States.

From our part, we still have to do so much that would make Russia attractive for foreign investors—although among international investors, the Americans are in first place. Naturally, first and foremost, we have to take care of the issues of the energy problem in the world at large. American business is showing a great interest in this sphere.

But we also know that President Bush has plans in the atomic energy field. Here, too, we think we've got a couple of things we could talk about. We have a very fruitful area of cooperation we could work in. We have a number of various structures that are working very appropriately now in reprocessing uranium.

We've got pretty good cooperation in space now. It seems to me that to a significant extent, that which exists now, it is functioning very successfully now, the space station, the International Space Station and the participation of the United States and Russia.

We have so many other areas we'd like to work in. But when the businessmen come—that depends, of course, on the U.S.

side—but we'll receive them at any time that's appropriate to them.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 5:30 p.m. at Brdo Castle. President Putin spoke in Russian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. In his remarks, President Bush referred to his mother, Barbara Bush, his mother-in-law, Jenna Welch, and his daughters, Jenna and Barbara P.; Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Igor Ivanov; and President Milan Kucan and Prime Minister Janez Drnovsek of Slovenia. He also referred to MAP, NATO's Membership Action Plan process. President Putin referred to former U.S. Secretary of State Madeline K. Albright; and to JPC, the NATO-Russia Permanent Joint Council. A reporter referred to NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Secretary of State Colin L. Powell and an Exchange With Reporters

June 18, 2001

The President. Good morning. The Secretary and I were following up on our recent trip to Europe. I had some conversations today with the President of Spain, the Prime Minister of Britain, the President of Poland, to brief them on my conversations with President Putin.

The conversation with President Putin was positive. It indicated to me that we can have a very frank and honest relationship, that there are areas where we can work together. And I shared with those three leaders the summary of my discussions with him.

They were most pleased that the conversation went well. They were pleased to hear that the United States welcomes Russia to look westward and will help Russia do so. And they were pleased to hear we're going to send some delegations over to Russia to have economic dialog.

So, the Secretary is here today, where we can follow up and put an action plan in place to take advantage of the cooperation that I'm confident can exist.

Senior Adviser on Strategic Initiatives Karl Rove

Q. Mr. President, I was wondering what your level of confidence is, sir, in one of your senior political advisers, Mr. Rove? It seems that some Republicans have voiced displeasure about some of the issues and decisions he was involved in recently—Vieques among them—as well as the calls for investigation of him, sir, in the House. I'm just wondering what your level of confidence is.

The President. My level of confidence with Karl Rove has never been higher. He's a man of—he gives me sound advice. He adheres to the ethical rules of our Government, and he's doing a great job on behalf of the American people.

Situation in Macedonia

Q. Mr. President, President Putin is now warning that the situation in Macedonia shows signs of becoming another, sort of, Kosovo. And in particular, he's called for closing the border between Kosovo and Macedonia, Albania and Macedonia. Are those steps that you would support? And what do you think can be done to avoid having the sort of U.S.-Russian tensions that occurred during the Kosovo crisis?

The President. Well, we strongly believe we need to shut off the border between Kosovo and Macedonia. As a matter of fact, our troops that participate in KFOR are doing just that.

President Putin also believes that we ought to all work together to achieve a political solution. And the Secretary of State—he'll be glad to comment on that—has worked very closely with Mr. Trajkovski, as well as the legitimate Albanians, those who aren't extremists, those who want the Government to work. We are—as you know, there was a meeting over the weekend, right before the weekend, where democratically elected officials in Macedonia met to determine how best to fashion a constitution that meets minority needs. We strongly support that process.

I believe we can work with the Russians. We share the same interests, which is a stable Macedonia. Our Governments understand that a Macedonia that is fractured, where extremists are able to make headway is a—it will create instability in the region.

U.S.S. Cole Investigation

Q. Mr. President, can you comment, sir, on reports out of Yemen that the FBI investigators that are looking into the bombing of the U.S.S. *Cole* are leaving the area?

The President. I'm not in a position to make comments on that right now. Once we finish our full investigation, our Government will be willing to discuss that.

Q. Are you pleased with the pace of the investigation, sir?

The President. I'd rather not comment about ongoing investigations, particularly in regards to the security of the country.

Energy Price Controls

Q. With the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission meeting on the California power crisis—price crisis today, are you still as firmly opposed, as you've said in the past, to mandatory, strict price controls?

The President. I am, because price controls do not create additional supply, nor do they reduce demand. I think price controls would not benefit the California consumer. It wouldn't help solve the problem. I'm interested in seeing what FERC comes up with. They're not talking about firm price controls. They're talking about a mechanism to—as I understand it—a mechanism to mitigate any severe price spike that may occur, which is completely different from price controls.

Q. Do you like that idea?

The President. I want to see what they have to say. I haven't had a chance to fully look at what their proposal is. As you know, it's an independent organization. And although I've had the opportunity of naming two members, I believe, to the FERC, they are independent. They know full well my administration's belief that price controls will not solve the problem. And a lot of folks in California understand that, as well.

Again, I repeat: Price controls do not increase supply nor reduce demand, and that's precisely what is needed in the State of California.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:20 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Jose Maria Aznar of Spain; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; President Aleksander Kwasnieski of Poland; President Vladimir Putin of Russia; and President Boris Trajkovski of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to Agricultural Leaders
June 18, 2001

Well, thank you very much. It's nice to be home. [*Laughter*] And welcome to the people's home. As I'm sure you can imagine, it is an unimaginable honor to live

here, and it was an unimaginable honor to represent our Nation overseas.

We had a really good trip, and I'm sure Ambassador Zoellick will brief you on the trip after I say a few words. But let me just say to you that—well, first, let me thank Ann Veneman for the job she's doing. I knew when I picked her, I picked a really smart, capable leader. And she has fulfilled all expectations. She's going to do a great job as representing an incredibly important part of our Nation's economy and our Nation's culture. So, Madam Secretary, thank you very much for your leadership.

Zoellick, thank you, sir, for your leadership, as well. I told people when I—that should I become the President, we would never use agriculture as a throwaway, as just a bargaining tool. And when I interviewed my friend Bob Zoellick, who I've known for a while, I said, "I want you to understand, the cornerstone of good trade policy is good ag policy. And we're not going to leave our farmers and ranchers behind when it comes to international agreements. " And I think you're going to find when he talks to you and when you question him, he's going to hold true to that philosophy. And I'm proud of his work. He's tough and he's steady, and I've got a pretty good look at who he's negotiating against—[*laughter*]—but he's going to do a fine job for all of America, including the agricultural sector.

I'm honored that Members of the United States Senate are here and Members of the House of Representatives are here. Mr. Chairman—well, Mr. Ex-Chairman. [*Laughter*] Thank you all for coming. [*Laughter*]

We're going to discuss here an incredibly important issue, and that is, how do we make sure American agriculture thrives and survives and grows stronger over time? It starts with understanding a couple of things: One, that we needed tax relief so that those farmers and ranchers who are actually in the black can keep more of what they make. And thanks to Members here, we got good tax relief.

And by the way, we also eliminated the death tax, which is incredibly important to American agriculture. And I want to thank you all on the stage here for—as well as your Members, for working hard to make the case that getting rid of the death tax is only fair, and that for those who worry about urban sprawl and issues such as that, that getting rid of the death tax is going to allow the family farm or the family ranch to pass from one generation to the next. And so it's a good piece of legislation, and many of you all helped make the case. And for that, all of us are grateful.

I also said in the campaign I'd work for value-added processing, that I wanted to make sure that the products we grew at home here had received enhanced value because of U.S. processing. And part of our energy plan, as you learned recently, includes ethanol. And that's an important part of an agriculture and an energy and an environmental mix that I think is best for the United States of America.

And finally, trade—and it's incredibly important for our Americans to understand how important trade is. The agricultural sector understands that. Twenty-five percent of farm receipts are generated by exports. One-quarter of all the revenues coming into the farm economy are generated as a result of a farmer in America or a rancher in America selling that product overseas. And that's as it should be. Our farmers and ranchers are the most efficient producers in the world. This is an area where our country has a competitive advantage. We're really good at it. And the job of this administration must be to open up more markets for ag products.

I used to tell people in the course of the campaign, I want America to feed the world. I want our great Nation that's a land of great, efficient producers to make sure people don't go hungry. And it starts with having an administration committed to

knocking down barriers to trade, and we are.

And you're about to hear from the Trade Representative, Ambassador Zoellick, who will describe to you a couple of things: One, that we want a new round of WTO discussions started with ag at its core. And it will be. I know there are some concerns about NAFTA in the country, but if people look at the statistics, farm exports to Mexico have doubled, nearly doubled, since NAFTA. That's important. I do believe we ought to expand the free trade of the Americas. I want this whole hemisphere trading in freedom, and I think it makes sense for our farmers and ranchers to do so.

In order for me to be as effective as I can be—and by the way, we understand this, too, and this is important for people to understand, that our farmers face incredible barriers to trade. And let me just give you a few statistics. The EU's tariffs for over-quota beef is between 91 percent and 177 percent. Japan's tariff for over-quota wheat is between 242 percent and 256 percent. Canada's tariff on over-quota butter is between 299 percent and 314 percent. Not only do America's farmers and ranchers face overt tariffs, there's hidden barriers as well, such as unscientific thought about the products we grow. One of the things Ambassador Zoellick and I talked about is making decisions based upon sound science, and not using science as a—or false science as a way to block entry for U.S. products.

And Zoellick also came back with some pretty good news from China. I don't know if you have all been following his negotiations there, but we're beginning to get our bilateral agreement with China made. And he can give you the details. But the agreement with China will end export subsidies and, we anticipate, boost U.S. agricultural exports to China by $2 billion a year. He sat down and rolled up his sleeves and kept in mind what I asked him to do, and he delivered a good agreement.

But there's more to do, and he told the Chinese that our bilateral agreements—that compliance, an early test of their willing to trade, will depend upon bilateral agreements on citrus and wheat, meat. And so we're just making—we're beginning to open up that big market. And I think the Ambassador deserves a lot of credit. But don't give him any until he describes exactly what he did to you. [*Laughter*]

But what I really want to do is to urge you all to help us get a trade promotion authority bill out of the Congress. I realized how important that was when I went overseas. I realized how important it was when I was at the Summit of the Americas. We've got countries in our hemisphere saying, "Will you trade with us?" And I say,"You bet." It's a free-trading administration, so long as everything is level and fair. And they say, "But how can we know you can trade with us, when we negotiate a deal and you don't have the authority to strike it without having to submit the bills to every single amendment there could be up on the Hill?" You see, they recognize that other Presidents used to have trade promotion authority, and now I don't.

And we're missing some great opportunities, not only in our hemisphere but around the world. These are opportunities for people who earn a living the hard way. These are hard—these are opportunities for hard-working ranchers and farmers. These are opportunities for working people.

I believe the more we trade overseas, the more prosperity there is at home. And I urge the Congress—and I know the Members here understand this—to pass trade promotion authority so this administration can open up markets all around the world. This is an important piece of legislation. This legislation is one of my top priorities because it's—a top priority of mine is the health of the agriculture sector in America.

You know, my wife just took off for Crawford, Texas, today. When we go there, people are wondering whether or not they

can make a living off the land. And they're more likely to be able to do so with more markets open. And I mean a trade promotion authority bill, too, that's not laden down with all kinds of excuses not to trade. I want a bill that doesn't have these codicils on it that frighten people from trading with us. I like to remind people that if you're a poor nation, it's going to be hard to treat your people well, and if you're a poor nation, it's going to be hard to have good environmental policy. And trade is the best way to eliminate poverty. Therefore, our trade agreements ought to be free from codicils which prevent us from freely trading.

And so I want to thank you for coming to the White House to give me an opportunity to urge you to work with these five Senators and three Congressmen, to work hard to get this trade promotion authority moving. The power to be—well, most of the power that be—sits right here. And these Members can use your help, as can we.

This call to arms for trade promotion authority is not a hollow call. This is important. It's not only important for this President; it's important for future Presidents because the world is a fantastic opportunity for us. And it's an opportunity we have got to seize if we expect to have prosperity in one of the most vital sectors in our Nation, and that's prosperity on our farms and ranches—a place not only where people will hopefully be able to make a good living but a place where people nurture the great values of America, faith and family.

It's my honor to be here, to have you here. Thanks for coming. I appreciate so very much your giving us a chance to call you into action. I'm honored to be up here with your leaders, and I do want to thank the Members of the Senate and the House for being here, as well.

God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:28 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Haiti
June 18, 2001

Dear _____ *:*

Pursuant to section 559(b) of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2000, I hereby transmit to you the final semiannual report concerning the status of Haiti's progress.

The report contains eight subsections that provide information required by section 559(b) of the Act. These subsections address:

- Governmental Institutions Envisioned in the 1987 Haitian Constitution;
- Privatization of Haiti's Major Public Entities;
- Efforts to Re-sign the Lapsed Bilateral Repatriation Agreement, and Cooperation in Halting Illegal Migration;
- Investigation and Prosecution of Extrajudicial and Political Killings, and Cooperation with the United States in Such Investigations;
- Removal and Maintenance of Separation of Human Rights Violators from Haitian Public Security Entities or Units;
- Ratification of the 1997 Maritime Counter-Narcotics Agreement;
- Development of Haiti's Domestic Capacity to Conduct Free, Fair, Democratic, and Administratively Sound Elections; and

- Demonstrated Commitment of Haiti's Minister of Justice to the Professionalism of the Judiciary, and Progress Toward Judicial Branch Independence.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Joseph R. Biden, Jr., chairman, and Jesse Helms, ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Robert C. Byrd, chairman, and Ted Stevens, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Henry J. Hyde, chairman, and Tom Lantos, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; and C.W. Bill Young, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations.

Remarks to Employees of the Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program Technology Evaluation Center in Arlington, Virginia
June 19, 2001

Thank you all. Thanks. Be seated. Please be seated. Mr. Secretary, thank you very much for your hospitality and your leadership. Senator Jeffords, Congressmen Green, Horn, and Langevin, thank you all for coming. It's good to see you all. These four Members of the United States Congress have had a piece—a hand in the strategy that I'm about to talk about, and I thank them for their leadership.

Dinah, thank you very much. It's always a joy to be around somebody who loves what she's doing—an enthusiastic soul, and someone who is making people's lives better. And I really appreciate you having me here. I want to thank David Chu for his work, and I want to thank Rhett Dawson, as well, who is the president of the Information Technology and Industry Council.

My fellow Americans, when the Americans with Disabilities Act was signed in 1990, our Nation made a promise: We will no longer underestimate the abilities of Americans with disabilities. We will treat Americans with disabilities as people to be respected, rather than problems to be confronted.

Our Nation has made progress in both attitude and law. Navigating through buildings and buses is far easier than it was just a decade ago. Now, the growth of new technologies creates new hopes and new obstacles.

The Internet brings a world of information into a computer screen, which has enriched the lives of many with disabilities. Yet, technology creates challenges of its own. The brilliant graphics that add life to many Web pages can make it difficult for a visually impaired person to get the information he or she needs from a Web site. Video technology is turning many computers into television sets. Yet, without closed captioning, many see a picture and no words. And complex keyboard commands make it difficult for a person with impaired motor skills to tap a computer's full potential. As a result, computer usage and Internet access for people with disabilities is half that of people without disabilities.

Researchers here at the Department of Defense and at other agencies throughout the Federal Government and in the private sector are developing solutions to these problems. I have just had the opportunity to tour the Department's assistive technology center, and I saw technologies that are helping people with disabilities enjoy the full range of opportunities made possible by the technology boom. Software allows hearing-impaired people to communicate with their coworkers by computer.

Screen reading technology makes it possible for the visually impaired to access information on a monitor. And voice recognition software unlocks new computing possibilities for people with impaired dexterity.

The technologies on display here have helped more than 20,000 Defense Department employees enjoy greater access to communications and computing equipment. And they will help countless individuals in the public and private sectors become fully integrated into the workplace.

I'm committed to bringing that technology to users as quickly as possible, and I'm committed to ensuring that Government Web sites become compatible with this evolving technology. And that is why I'm pleased to announce that when Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, authored by Jim Jeffords, becomes effective for all Federal agencies next Monday, there will be more opportunities for people of all abilities to access Government information. Section 508 requires Federal agencies to make sure that the electronic and information technology they use is accessible for people with disabilities.

Increasingly, Americans use information technology to interact with their Government. They rely on thousands of Government Web pages to download forms, learn about Federal programs, find out where to turn for Government assistance, and communicate with elected officials, such as the President. And because of Section 508, Government Web sites will be more accessible for millions of Americans who have disabilities.

Section 508 will also make the Federal Government a better employer, as roughly 120,000 Federal employees with disabilities will have greater access to the tools they need to better perform their jobs.

This is one example of the successful public-private partnerships that are removing barriers to full community participation by Americans with disabilities. I thank the leaders from the technology industry who are with us today for your innovation and your ongoing cooperation.

Full implementation of Section 508 is a key element of an agenda I announced a year ago and began implementing in February. It is called the New Freedom Initiative, and its goal is to prepare—is to help Americans with disabilities realize their potential and to achieve their dreams.

We've asked Congress to increase funding to bring assistive technologies to market more quickly, to help make them more affordable for the people who need them, and to speed research in developing new technologies. We have sought to make it easier for Americans with disabilities to enter the workforce by finding new ways to get people to their jobs or relying on new technologies to help people work from their home.

We recognize that small businesses and community groups like churches, synagogues, mosques, and civic organizations may have trouble finding the resources to fully comply with the ADA. So we've asked Congress to support efforts to help them make their facilities more accessible. And we understand that new policies will mean little if we don't fully enforce the ADA. So my administration is doing just that.

While these Federal efforts are crucial to guaranteeing full accessibility for Americans with disabilities, we must also help them connect with their local communities. So I've signed an Executive order requiring full implementation of the Supreme Court's 1999 *Olmstead* decision. *Olmstead* and the ADA rightly mandate that individuals with disabilities who can receive support and treatment in a community setting should be given a reasonable opportunity to live close to their families and friends when appropriate.

My Executive order directs key Federal agencies, like the Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Justice and the Social Security Administration to work with States to implement the

Olmstead decision and the ADA. It directs those Agencies to explore how we can increase community-based services for people with disabilities, and it directs Attorney General Ashcroft and Secretary Thompson to fully enforce Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and ensure that no one is unjustly institutionalized. Secretary Thompson has also made seed money available to help every State develop a plan for implementing *Olmstead.*

The *Olmstead* Executive order will increase freedom for people with disabilities. It is compassionate; it is needed; and it is now the Federal official policy of my administration. Americans must have the opportunity to live independently, work productively, and participate fully in community life.

Many Americans achieve this independence through homeownership. But too often, the high cost of therapeutic care and assistive equipment and technologies make the goal of homeownership unattainable for people with disabilities. That's why I'm optimistic about a pilot program led through the Congress by Representative Mark Green, and soon to be implemented by Secretary Mel Martinez at HUD, that will allow many people with disabilities to buy their own homes. By making the Section 8 low-income rental assistance program more flexible, the Federal Government can make homeownership a reality for more Americans.

The new Section 8 HUD pilot program, the *Olmstead* Executive order, and the full implementation of Section 508 will help eliminate the barriers that many Americans with disabilities face. The proposals I sent to Congress will build on our society's commitment to welcome all Americans as friends and neighbors. When governments, business, and individuals work together to build a welcoming society, Americans of every ability will benefit.

Thank you for what you're doing here at the Department of Defense. Thank you for your compassion. And may God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:19 a.m. in the auditorium at the Pentagon. In his remarks, he referred to Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld and Dinah Cohen, director, Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program. The Executive order of June 18 on community-based alternatives for individuals with disabilities is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the Summit on the 21st Century Workforce
June 20, 2001

Thank you all very much. Thank you very much. Please be seated. Madam Secretary, thank you very much, and I appreciate so very much your service to the country. I made a good pick when I convinced Elaine to join my Cabinet; she's doing a terrific job. I think Rod Paige is here, too, the Secretary of Education. If he's not—he is here. Hey, Mr. Secretary. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Members of Congress, thank you all so very much for being here. I spend a lot of quality time with Members of Congress these days. [*Laughter*] I think we're making pretty good progress, and I appreciate you all for coming.

I want to thank the business and labor leaders who are here. And I want to thank you all for taking an interest in the American workforce.

As Elaine mentioned, I just came back from Europe and had a fascinating experience. It's such an honor to represent our great Nation around the world. We've spent

a lot of time talking about industry and trade and commerce; after all, we trade over a trillion dollars a year between Europe and the United States. And I reminded people a solid truth, that the strength of our economy depends upon the people who go to work every day—that there is a lot of fiscal matters that we'll take up and monetary matters, but the truth of the matter is, the great strength of the American economy is our workforce, the hard men and women who work every single day to make a living. And that is your concern today, and I commend you all very much for giving this conference your time and your interest and your talent.

Our responsibilities are clear: We should try to make it easier for people to find good jobs by giving them the education and training they need to succeed; second, we should help them keep good jobs and encourage employers to do more for their workers; and third, we owe them a chance to build a nest egg that will help them maintain a high standard of living in their retirement years.

As you well know, a successful working life usually begins with a good education. This has always been true. But it's even more true as our economy changes. We live in a time of incredible opportunities to succeed, and every child growing up in America, regardless of background or accent, deserves an equal chance to take advantage of these opportunities. Five months after the day that I was inaugurated, I am pleased to say that we are nearing historic reforms in public education. This is a victory for every child and for every family in America.

Last week education reform passed the Senate by a vote of 91 to 8. When these reforms become law, schools will have more freedom from needless meddling by Washington. There will be fewer mandates and regulations for schools to meet, more freedom and more flexibility, as schools live up to high standards they will now be required to meet. You see, I believe every child can learn. I believe we've got to start with the mind-set that every child in America can learn. And we need to raise the bar and trust local people to meet the standards and—the high standards.

Every public school, starting next year, as well, will be held accountable for its performance. It's not enough to promise and proclaim high standards. The American people expect results. Families and parents want results. And the law will soon require such results with testing every child for every grade, three through eight, in reading and math.

The critics say, "Why?" The answer is, because we want to know. And we want to know early, before it's too late. This business about passing children through grades because of age has got to end. This society must ask the question, "What do you know?"

I'm grateful for the hard work in Capitol Hill by both Republicans and Democrats on this measure. We've worked together from the start to what I hope is the finish soon. Congress needs to finish this work. The conference needs to come together. The House conferees and the Senate conferees need to meet, reconcile their differences, and get the bill to my desk before public education starts next fall. It's time to act, and it's time to act with meaningful, real reforms.

All of us recognize that education spending should be increased—I realize that; the Senate realizes that; the House recognizes that—but only where we're certain that the money will be well spent. Additional resources must be tied to demonstrated progress and results. As Congress writes the final bill, I trust that members of both parties will stay true to that principle. We must not repeat the mistakes of years past, confusing spending money with progress. We must keep the focus on reform and results. It's the least we owe the workforce of tomorrow, the very least—which is a good, sound education.

But at every turn, Federal policy must keep pace with changes of our workforce. This morning I took one step, with an Executive order formally establishing an Office of the 21st Century Workforce within the Department of Labor. This office will be charged with identifying new challenges and new opportunities for American workers.

My Executive order also creates a Presidential council to advise on labor issues and especially on those issues affecting the lives of workers and their families. Every working person is entitled to expect fair treatment from the employers they work for. Wherever possible, we should find ways to remove conflicts between home and work. For example, more workers should be able to take advantage of comp time. Federal workers already enjoy this privilege, and private sector employees deserve the same. Many hard-working people would prefer to be able to choose a few extra days at home instead of a few extra dollars on payday. We've got to trust the workers of America to make the decisions that's best for their families.

Until fairly recently, many Americans have never known paydays at all nor the other rewards that work brings. They have been denied jobs on account of a disability. And one of the great advances in our time is that persons with disabilities have been more welcomed in the workplace, but there's still more to do. We must speed up the day when the last barrier has been removed to full and independent lives for every American, with or without disability.

I've sent to Congress a set of proposals called the New Freedom Initiative. It's an important step to ensuring that all Americans with disabilities can participate more fully in the life of their communities and of our country. We'll help our fellow Americans gain greater access to assistive technology. We'll also help them gain access to public transportation and to the workplace, itself, in keeping with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

I've also asked Congress to create a fund to help people with disabilities to buy the equipment they need to telecommute. We'll provide tax incentives to encourage employers to provide such equipment. And we'll protect home offices from needless OSHA regulations. Tens of millions of Americans today work out of their homes. For most, it's a convenience; for workers with disabilities, it is a revolution. And we want as many Americans as possible to share in this revolution of independence.

An urgent issue for many workers today is quality health care. Like education reform, this issue is reaching an hour of decision, and before this year is out, I want to sign into law a Patients' Bill of Rights. And let me be specific again about the type of bill I'd like to sign. It must cover everyone, all patients and all private health care plans. The standards should be strong enough to protect everyone, yet flexible enough to preserve the good work that has been done in many States. It must guarantee all patients important rights, the right to get emergency treatment at the nearest emergency room, the right to see a specialist when they need one. A woman should be able to visit her gynecologist, and parents, their children's pediatrician, without going through a gatekeeper.

In any bill that receives my signature, patients will have the right to a fair and immediate review when medical care is denied. If a health care plan denies care, you should be able to appeal immediately to an independent, impartial review panel of medical doctors. And if they say you need the care, your health care plan must provide it, period.

It's important for Americans to know, with that kind of strong, independent review process, most disagreements will not wind up in court. The law should allow the review process to work, not short-circuit it by inviting unnecessary lawsuits.

I believe that an HMO that wrongly denies coverage to a patient should be held liable in court. But we must keep our eye on the purpose. We want to give patients the care they need when they need it. The idea is to serve more patients, not to create more lawsuits in America. We can provide meaningful remedies to patients without driving up the cost of health care or forcing employers to drop coverage.

Measured against this criterion I've described, there are some good bills and some bad bills. And I want to thank Senators John Breaux, Democrat; Senator Bill Frist, Republican; Senator Jim Jeffords, Independent—[*laughter*]—for working hard to come up with a reasonable solution to this very important problem.

Finally, the end of a working life should not be the beginning of worry and hardship. The tax reform package I signed into law 2 weeks ago will help in several ways. For starters, it leaves more money in every working person's pocket. We remembered whose money it was we're spending up here; it's the working people's money. And it gives workers the chance to put more of their own money into an IRA or a 401(k) plan.

The tax bill also eased the IRS limits on pension benefits that you're allowed to receive. We heard from many unions and employers about the need for these changes, and we listened. This will help our workers prepare for later years, sending less money to Washington and putting more money in their own savings accounts.

And I've also established a bipartisan commission to save and strengthen Social Security. With this help and with the support of Congress—we need to get beyond the years of delay and finger pointing and quarreling about this incredibly important issue. The days of shifting blame must end in order to save this important system.

To those who are retired and near-retired, a promise made will be a promise kept by this Government. But to the younger workers who wonder whether or not there is going to be a Social Security system around, you have an administration and a vehicle now that's willing to think differently, to trust you with your own money, to say it's your money to begin with, so that you can build your own nest egg that you can pass from one generation to the next. It's time.

One of the great virtues of the country is the value we place on hard work—it really makes America unique, in a different place—and the respect we have for those who work hard. Mine is an administration that understands the important resource of the men and women of America, the hard-working people who make this country grow. And ours is an administration that will always value hard work and trust the individual and understand the limitations of Government.

I want to thank you all for giving me a chance to come by and visit with you. It is a huge honor to be the President of the greatest nation on the face of the Earth. And it's a huge honor to be the President of a nation full of decent, hard-working, caring, and compassionate people. I thank you for the privilege.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:35 a.m. at the MCI Center. In his remarks, he referred to Labor Secretary Elaine Chao. The Executive order of June 20 on the 21st century workforce initiative is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Representative-Elect J. Randy Forbes
June 20, 2001

The President. It is my honor to welcome the newest Member of the United States Congress to the Oval Office. Randy Forbes ran a great race. He won a race a lot of folks didn't think he could win. And he did it because he talked about issues that mattered to the people of Virginia: tax relief, Social Security reform, strong national defense.

We all knew he was a good candidate. We didn't realize how good until the results came in last night. So it's an honor for the Vice President and me, the chairman of the party, Congressman Davis, to welcome you both to the Oval Office and congratulate you and look forward to working with you.

Representative Forbes. Well, thank you, Mr. President. And it's an exciting victory for us, and we couldn't have done it without the help from you, Mr. President, and the Vice President, and also the great chairman of our party and chairman of the congressional committee. They all just put so many resources together and made this victory possible.

The President. Congratulations.

Representative Forbes. Thank you.

The President. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:10 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. James S. Gilmore III of Virginia, chairman, Republican National Committee; and Representative Tom Davis, chairman, National Republican Congressional Committee.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Easter Seals Representatives and an Exchange With Reporters
June 20, 2001

The President. It's an honor for me to welcome the representatives from the Easter Seals here, two courageous Americans who are compassionate to give back to their country, and it's an honor to have you all in the Oval Office. Thanks for coming.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. Have you talked to Arafat yet?

The President. I talked to Chairman Arafat today.

Q. What can you tell us about that conversation?

The President. I told him—I talked to him about—I talked to Prime Minister Sharon, Mubarak, as well as Mr. Arafat. And I said we're making some progress and that they all must continue to work toward breaking the cycle of violence.

I do feel like it's the appropriate time for Colin Powell to go to the Mideast—and he's headed there next week—and that the parties must continue to work in an all-out effort to bring peace. And people can find excuses or rationale not to continue to work to break the cycle of violence. I urged them just to not think that way, to believe in the possible. And we're making enough progress for me to feel comfortable about asking the Secretary of State to go.

We have another mission from our Government to remain involved in the process. We look forward to the implementation of Mitchell. But it's hard—we cannot start

Mitchell, the Mitchell plan, until the cycle of violence has been crushed and broken. And we believe we are making enough progress with that to send the Secretary of State.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:03 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel; and President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt. The President also referred to the Report of the Sharm el-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee, chaired by former Senator George J. Mitchell, issued April 30. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to the Business Roundtable
June 20, 2001

Thank you very much. Well, welcome to the White House. [*Laughter*] The Vice President and I are honored to be with you today. As I understand it, I'm to speak; the Vice President is to speak; Colin Powell is to speak; and Zoellick is to speak. And so I thank you all for your interest.

Since I'm not going to be here to introduce the Vice President, Dick Cheney is a fabulous partner. Many of you know him; he brings a lot of good judgment and a steady hand. And my administration is going to be successful because of the players in it, and he's going to be one of the key players. And I'm really honored that he's here and honored that he's the Vice President.

Zoellick is doing a pretty good job, too. [*Laughter*] I know because I got to see him in action in Europe. I had an interesting experience in Europe. First of all, it's a huge honor to represent America overseas. And it was an important trip because it gave me a chance to reinforce my administration's commitment to the European alliances—to NATO, to the expansion of NATO, to working with the European Union and the expansion of the European Union.

There were some doubts in Europe as to whether or not ours would be a nation that would be internationalists with an American flavor, and they found out that we are. And I come home feeling upbeat about the relationships that I made and about the messages I was able to deliver.

And secondly, I had a very good visit with Mr. Putin. I wasn't sure what to make of the man. I always was withholding judgment until I had a chance to meet him. But I found him to be a forward-thinking person and someone with whom our Nation should and will work to bring security to that part of the world and to bring prosperity, hopefully, through trade, to the Russian people. One of the things he asked is that I assemble a delegation, headed by somebody close to me. So I picked Don Evans, who is not only my close friend but Secretary of Commerce, to travel to Russia with some entrepreneurs and some American business people. And we will do that this summer. I believe he's interested in having a good relationship, and I know I am. And that's a pretty good start.

But one of the things that I got to see Bob Zoellick in action on was our discussions about trade with the Europeans. I was able to make a firm commitment to our European partners that we want trade. We want open markets. We want to do everything in our power to make trade easier, not harder. I also reminded them that it's important for our economy to grow. If you want to trade with the United States, it's important to have a trading partner

whose economy is vital and strong, where capital is flowing freely.

That's why I assured them that we were on the right track when it came to balancing our environmental needs and economic growth and assured them that we share the same goal of reducing CO_2, but we will do so in a way that doesn't damage our economy, that we believe that you can have economic vitality and good stewardship of our resources.

And we also—I reminded them that one of the things our Nation needed to do was to develop a sound energy plan. It comes as a surprise to some that ours is the first administration who's willing to develop an energy plan and not only willing to develop one but to defend it, an energy plan that Dick will describe in detail, that's based upon sound conservation, more supply, and the ability to get supply to consumers.

We had a great discussion, and what I'd like to do, before I talk about asking your help on a key legislative matter when it comes to trade, is I'd like to thank you first for helping on tax relief.

Our economy is sputtering; many of you know that firsthand. And I believe that the best we can do in Government, at least in our part of Government, is to provide fiscal stimulus. And the package that we have done is a good package. It's one that will not only put money in the hands of American consumers; it is one also that brings some certainty into the Tax Code. In other words, it's certain that tax relief is going to happen, and hopefully, that will stimulate confidence in the entrepreneurial sector.

Secondly, a lot of folks don't understand this, but there's a lot of small businesses that will benefit from the reduction of all rates, not just a few but all rates. Many of the small-business owners and the entrepreneurs in our respective States pay tax rates at the personal level, not the corporate level. They're sole proprietors; they're mom-and-pops that pay personal income taxes. And when you drop that top rate like we did, it's going to stimulate economic growth and the flow of capital throughout our economy, which is going to be important to recovery. And so I want to thank you for the tax relief package. It was necessary; it was important; and it was timely.

And secondly, I want to thank you for your help on an education plan. It passed the House. The bill passed the Senate 91 to 8, and it's now headed to conference. And I hope that the leadership will move that bill to get it to my desk so that public school districts can plan for the reforms inherent in the package. It's important to get that bill signed as soon as possible so that these school districts that are beginning to wonder what Federal dollars mean in the coming school year will have time to plan. They don't need to play politics with the school bill. This bill rises above partisan politics. It's important to get it going.

The inherent reforms in the bill are these: One, we set high standards and high expectations. It's—the philosophy is fairly simple. It says, every child can learn.

Secondly, we believe in local control of schools. We spend Federal money without a lot of strings. There's a lot more flexibility now at the local level. It recognizes—this bill recognizes that one size does not fit all when it comes to educating children. The issues in Texas, in south Texas, are different from the issues in Vermont or Connecticut. And the issues in south Texas are different from the issues in north Texas. There needs to be flexibility when it comes to developing the tactics necessary to make sure every child learns.

But the cornerstone of reform in this bill says this: It says, if you receive Federal money, you must measure. This is a major overhaul of the education philosophy. It says, in return for Federal help, you, the school districts and the States, must develop strong accountability measures so that we know—we know—whether children are

learning. It's a paradigm shift—to use a fancy word.

All of a sudden, we're beginning to ask the question, "Do you know what you're supposed to know?" At present or in the recent past, the question was asked, "How old are you? Well, if you're 6, we'll just move you here; and if you're 10, you're supposed to be here; and if you're 14, you're here." It was a process-driven world that shuffled many kids through our system without asking the question, "What do you know," and without saying, "If you don't know what you're supposed to know, we'll make sure you do early, before it's too late." This is a great piece of legislation, and many of you helped work on it, and I want to thank you for that very much.

I gave a speech at Notre Dame, where I talked about the next step of welfare reform. I said that—I began with Lyndon Johnson's speech at the University of Texas in the midsixties, where he declared a War on Poverty. I then said that there was some unintended consequences of that War on Poverty. Many people became dependent upon Government. While it helped some—and there are some fine programs that came out of it—many folks became dependent upon Government, and many in our society became dependent on Government to provide compassion. In other words, people looked and said, "Well, don't worry. The Federal Government will solve the woes of our citizenry. We don't have to do anything as citizens."

I then said that the reforms signed by President Clinton and passed by a Republican Senate and House on welfare reform address one-half of the equation. It reduced dependency upon Government. It's now time to address the compassionate side of effective welfare reform.

And one of the statistics I noted in my speech was how abysmal corporate giving is to religious organizations whose sole intent is to help people, people who have heard the call, "What can I do to help a neighbor in need?"—people who live by the Golden Rule. And yet there are many charters of corporate America that refuse—or not refuse, just can't give and don't want to give to organizations whose intent it is to exist in neighborhood after neighborhood to solve people's lives by helping their souls. And one of my calls to corporate America is, please address the issue of funding faith-based and community-based groups whose sole purpose it is to make somebody's life better.

One of the big initiatives I'm confident we're going to get through the Congress is one that says, we understand there are thousands of children who could easily be left behind in America, particularly those whose parents may be in prison or a parent is in prison. And what I want to do—and we put money in the budget—is I want mentoring programs all across the country to address, specifically, the needs of these children. I want there to be some citizen who puts his arm around a child and says, "Somebody loves you here in America. Somebody cares for you. Somebody feels your hurt and your pain." And you all can help those programs, and I urge you to do so.

Many of you give to great causes, but please don't forget the faith-based organizations that exist for the sole purpose of loving a neighbor, just like you'd like to be loved yourself.

And I want to ask your help, too, on trade. I don't think Americans—some Americans—really understand the benefit of trade, fully understand that trade helps people who want to find work, that open trade is vital to—for economic growth. It's essential that we send the message out that trade is good for the working men and women of America. I've seen it in my own State. Texas is a great beneficiary of NAFTA.

And so is Mexico, which is the most fantastic news of all. We want our partners to succeed. If Mexico is our friend, which I believe she is, we want Mexico to be prosperous. We also want Mexico to be

prosperous because we want our people to be able to find work at home. People are coming to America because they want to feed their families. Family values does not stop at the Rio Bravo, and America has got to understand that.

But America has also got to understand the hope of free trade, not only with Mexico and Canada but in our hemisphere. And that's why we're—that's why the first meeting I had was the Summit of the Americas, to talk about the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas. My belief is that when you have a secure neighborhood and a prosperous neighborhood, America is better off. And so the first summit I had with foreign leaders with—34 democratically elected leaders showed up in Quebec City, and the cornerstone of those discussions was open markets and free trade.

We're going to have another global—another round of global trade talks that Ambassador Zoellick is leading from my administration. And we urge the European Union to cooperate with us to begin those talks.

But in order for me to be effective on trade, I need trade promotion authority. I need the ability to speak with a single voice for our country. I need to have the capacity as an administration to negotiate free trade agreements without the fear of them being undermined. Otherwise, our trading partners are going to be confused and concerned about an honest and open dialog.

And yet, the President doesn't have trade promotion authority. And so I'm asking you to help join us; get this bill passed through the Congress.

And we should not let legitimate environmental and labor concerns undermine the capacity for the President to make good free trade agreements. I explained to the critics in Congress—there are some who are legitimately concerned about the environment and labor. But I remind them that if you believe in trade, you believe that prosperity will spread. If you believe in trading with a country, it will help that country grow economically. And a country that is more prosperous is one more likely to be able to take care of their environment, and one more prosperous is one more likely to take care of their workforce. And if you believe in improving the environment, in helping the labor conditions in countries, don't wall off those countries. Don't create—don't enhance poverty by refusing to allow there to be trade.

Now, there are some who want to put codicils on the trade protection authority for one reason: They don't like free trade. They're protectionists, and they're isolationists. And we must reject that kind of thought here in America. Free trade is good for America. It's good for our trading partners. It will help alleviate poverty. And as importantly, it will help democracy spread her wings. Because when you introduce the disciplines and freedoms of a free market and an open market, it's amazing what happens in totalitarian countries. They taste freedom in the economy, and they begin to ask for freedom with religion and freedom with speech and freedom to express themselves in the ballot box.

Now, our Nation is better off as a free trading country, and I am here to ask for your help. It's important. It's a priority of my administration, and we're going to dedicate the time and energy and effort to see if we can't get a good bill through the United States Congress.

You might be able to tell, I'm kind of enthusiastic about my work. [*Laughter*] You would be, too, if you got to see what I see. See, I get to see an America from a different perspective. I get to see an America that is—loves her Government; sometimes they like the President. [*Laughter*] But they care about the country. This is a fantastic land. It is a land of decent and caring and honorable citizens who really want the best for their families and for their neighbors and for their country.

It is a huge honor to be the President of this great land. We've got some great causes ahead of us, peace and prosperity.

But there is the mission also of lifting this country's spirit. And I'm dedicated to doing that. I want to call upon the best of America and American citizens. And I'm enthusiastic about that calling because I truly believe it will leave this land a better place.

Thank you all for being here, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:17 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Vladimir Putin of Russia.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus
June 20, 2001

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

In accordance with Public Law 95–384 (22 U.S.C. 2373(c)), I submit to you this report on progress toward a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus question covering the period April 1 through May 31, 2001. The previous submission covered events during the period February 1 through March 31, 2001.

The United Nations continued in its efforts to sustain the proximity talks that started in December 1999. The United States remains committed to the United Nations effort to find a just and lasting settlement to the Cyprus problem.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 21.

Remarks at Oak Mountain State Park in Birmingham, Alabama
June 21, 2001

Thank you all very much. Please be seated. Senator, thank you very much. It's an honor to be traveling back to Alabama today with Jeff Sessions. I'm going to spend a little time this evening touting his cause. But I will tell you, he's been a loyal friend, a strong supporter of Alabama, and a great United States Senator.

It's an honor to be with members of the Alabama congressional delegation here. We've got six of them that flew down today. These men are honest, decent, hard-working people—had five Republicans, one Democrat, all who worked together for doing what's right for Alabama. And I appreciate so very much these fine gentlemen for traveling with me today, and I'm proud to call you friends.

It's an honor to be here with the Lieutenant Governor and the attorney general of the State of Alabama. I want to thank Don Cooley and Jimmy Shivers for giving me a brief tour of this important part of the world. I want to thank the YMCA and the counselors at the YMCA and the young men and women who are teaching children right from wrong, teaching children that in life, somebody does care for them. No better spot to be learning compassion and love than in the outdoors, and it's an honor to be here.

It's good to see my friend Ray Scott. Make sure you behave yourself, Ray. [*Laughter*] I've been knowing him a long time, and I appreciate the members of the bass clubs from around Alabama for being here to work with the kids, to teach them how to fish, and to teach them to appreciate the wonders of nature.

I'm impressed by the fact that 600,000 people come to this park every year. It means it's just not a park for the few; it's a park for the many. And people come here for all kinds of reasons. They come here to hike. They come here to spend some time with their families. They come here to fish. I wish I was coming here to fish a little more often, Ray. [*Laughter*]

This is a State park, maintained almost entirely by State money, operated by the people who are closest to the people, who understand the local wishes and the local needs. And you seem to be doing a pretty darn good job. It's a beautiful spot.

Thirty-six years ago the Federal Government undertook to assist parks just like this one. Congress created a program called the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Half the money was supposed to be paid to the States, to conserve and maintain their natural resources. Oak Mountain received some of that money in 1983—some of the money in 1983.

But for a long period of time, the Federal Government has been falling short on its commitment to this fund, and many States have been denied money that was promised the citizens. And that's not fair, and under the budget I have submitted to the United States Congress, that practice will stop.

In outlining my budget priorities this year, I proposed fully funding the Land and Water Conservation Fund; $900 million will fully fund the fund. It's the highest request in the fund's history, and half of the money will go to the States, just like the authors of the law intended.

And why is that important? Why is that important? Well, one, it's a high environmental priority for me. Two, I don't believe all knowledge and wisdom resides in Washington, DC. I believe the good people of Alabama care a lot about the resources in Alabama. I know the fishermen care about clean water. I know the people who hike the trails want to have good hiking trails. I know people who picnic in the park want clean parks. And so that's why, under my vision, the amount of money that Alabama will receive to help in conservation programs would increase by 387 percent. It makes sense. It's good public policy.

I believe Federal money is most useful when it comes without strings, when it comes without dictates. And so I believe we need to give States new flexibility on how to manage their conservation and resources. You could use the money to buy parkland. You can use it to protect endangered species. You can use it to try to get the hydrilla that clog some of our lakes. You could have a generation of environmental programs working with landowners to protect wildlife or to protect endangered species. You know, it's interesting, the money it costs to buy a single acre of parkland, a State could encourage environmental protection over many, many acres of land by working with private property owners. There is a lot States can do with the money. And it's important for the Federal Government to understand that.

I believe trusting local people to make local decisions is the right public policy. And that's what this plan does, and that's what we do with other areas in the Federal Government, as well. One of the key components of tax relief—and I'm proud of the fact that all members of the congressional delegation and two United States Senators—all members of the congressional delegation here present and the two United States Senators supported tax relief. Do you know why it's important? Because it trusts people with their own money. It says that we trust the people.

As you can see, I've asked for funding an important priority, the Land and Water

Conservation Fund. But another important priority was to say we trust the people of Alabama and Texas and States all across the country to spend the money as they see fit. And so for the first time in a generation, we've got historic, across-the-board tax relief, because we understand how hard the people of Alabama and the people of America are working and because we trust the people to make the right decisions for their families, the right decisions on what to do with money.

The Federal Government has set budget priorities. But with money left over, we trust the people, and it's the right thing to do. And I'm honored that you guys voted with me on this tax bill, and so will the people of Alabama.

And we're making progress in education, too. I believe we can get a good education bill finally out of the Congress. It passed the House, and it passed the Senate, and now they're going to work out their differences. And they're going to put a bill up on my desk soon, I hope, which will be historic reform. The cornerstone of the bill says we're setting high standards, but we have more flexibility for local folks. One size does not fit all when it comes to the education of the children in America.

We have as a cornerstone accountability. We say, "If you receive Federal money, show us whether or not the children are learning to read and write and add and subtract." Instead of a system that says, "Oh, how old are you? If you're 10, we'll put you here, and if you're 12, we'll put you here," we're beginning to change the way of thinking so we ask the question, "Before we put you anywhere, we want to know what you know. And if you don't know what you're supposed to know, we'll correct it early, before it's too late."

This is a good piece of legislation. I can't wait to sign it, and I hope the members of the conference committee do not hold it up for political reasons. They need to get it to my desk so that the public schools in Alabama and all across the country can start planning for their fall year.

I believe it's so important for us to set priorities at the Federal level, and I have set priorities. Education is a priority. Improving the military is a priority of mine. One of the priorities in our budget is to make sure the folks who wear the uniform get paid better, and I believe Congress will enact that; that folks get housed better, and we're making good progress of housing our troops, although we've got a lot of work to do. It's also important to have a Commander in Chief who sets a clear mission for the military, and that's to be prepared to fight and win war and, therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place.

So today I've discussed some priorities of mine. And thankfully we worked together, both Members of the House and the Senate, Republicans and Democrats, to support a budget that has $661 billion of what they call discretionary spending.

I understand the pressures in Congress. It's one thing to set a budget, but then people start spending. And my call to the Congress is: Stick to the budget. My call to the Congress is: We worked hard to get a good budget, and it's important for people not to overspend that budget.

I talked to Sonny Callahan of the great State of Alabama about that subject, and he understands. He's got a tough job. He hears all kinds of requests on the Appropriations Committee. He's one of the leaders on the Appropriations Committee. But Sonny and the other Members came in the office the other day and said, "Mr. President, we're going to work to stick to the budget." That's what we told the people we would do, and that's what I expect Congress to do. And if they try to bust the budget, there's a remedy. If they get over the budget, there's a simple remedy, and that's to put the veto pen on it and send it back to the Congress until we get the budget right.

We're also making progress in changing the tone in Washington. And I think that's

really important. I think it's important for folks, no matter what your political party is—Republican, Democrat, none of the above—to look at Washington and be proud of what you see.

I think it's incredibly important for those of us in positions of responsibility to conduct our debates in a way that elevates politics, that elevates public service, that sends a clear signal to the people of America that serving your country is a noble calling. And we are making some progress.

Oh, occasionally there is a shrill voice out there or two. Sometimes they say things about the President that my mother doesn't like to read about. [*Laughter*] But it takes a lot of work. You can't change a culture overnight.

But I am here to report to the good people of Alabama, we are making progress. The rhetoric is slowly but surely changing. The debates are becoming more honest. The philosophical differences are less bitter. And I believe we're getting a spirit of accomplishment in Washington, DC—that slowly but surely, people are beginning to realize we need to be judged upon the results, not upon what we say on TV; that we're a results-oriented country and it's important for us to be judged based upon results. And slowly but surely, people are beginning to realize that they have a President who set a pretty clear and simple agenda, profound agenda, and is willing to share results and credit for results when they happen.

I am proud that this Democrat Member from Alabama voted for tax relief. He deserves just as much credit as the two men sitting next to him as a Republican. You see, party is important. But it's not nearly as important as doing what's right for the American people. It's not nearly as important as setting the right example for the children of America, as well.

Well, things are getting pretty good up there in Washington, and I'm honored to be your President. I tell you, one of the things I was sharing with the Members here coming down that I'm so proud of—and it happened here again, and it's going to happen all across the country every time I travel—is, one, the number of people who come out just to wave. People of the country respect the Presidency. Sometimes they like the President, but they respect the Presidency, and for that I am grateful. It reminds me of the huge responsibility I have, a responsibility that I'll take seriously and a responsibility that I hold dear to my heart, and that is to call upon the best of America.

And this is an appropriate setting for me to speak briefly about that. The best of America happens when some neighbor says, "What can I do to help a neighbor in need?" The best in America happens when people hear the universal call to love a neighbor just like you'd like to be loved yourself. The best of America occurs when people walk up and say, "Mr. President, I'm praying for you." The best of this country happens when decent citizens work hard to make their neighborhoods and communities a better place for every citizen, regardless of accent, background, religion, or color.

And the good news about being the President is that I am fortunate enough to be the President of a country full of people just like that, full of the best of the country.

So it's my honor to talk about kind of what's going on in the Nation's Capital, a little bit about the budget, talk about some of our successes, to outline a very important conservation and environmental policy that will make a huge difference all across the country.

But also it's my opportunity to thank the good people of Alabama for giving me a chance to be the President of the greatest nation on the face of the Earth.

Thank you all for coming, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:47 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Gov. Steve Windom, Attorney General Bill Pryor, and

Director of Parks Don Cooley of Alabama; James Shivers, superintendent, Oak Mountain State Park; and Ray Scott, founder, Bass Anglers Sportsman Society.

Statement on the Announcement of Criminal Indictments for the Khobar Towers Bombing
June 21, 2001

On June 25, 1996, a massive truck bomb exploded outside the Khobar Towers apartment complex in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, killing 19 American servicemen and injuring 372 other Americans and Saudis. For the last 5 years, the Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation have conducted an intensive investigation of this deplorable act of terrorism.

Today the Department of Justice announced criminal indictments of 14 people, 13 Saudis and one Lebanese, for conspiring and carrying out the bombing of Khobar Towers. The Department's investigation into this matter will continue and additional charges are possible.

I applaud the work of the Department of Justice and the FBI who have spent countless hours pursuing this case. And I want to thank the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for their assistance in this investigation. Finally, and most important, to the families of those who were killed and to those who were injured, I want to extend my personal sympathy and to assure you that your Government will not forget your loss and will continue working, based on the evidence, to make sure that justice is done.

Videotaped Remarks in a Tribute to Tommy G. Thompson
June 21, 2001

Well, thank you all very much. I'm honored to join so many good friends. And I'm pleased to help pay tribute to a great Governor, a great Cabinet Secretary, and a good man, my friend Tommy Thompson.

Tonight we salute Tommy Thompson for his 14 years as Wisconsin's Governor. For almost a decade and a half, Tommy was a pioneer. From school choice to health care, Tommy was always on the cutting edge looking for new ideas, even while holding to timeless principles.

Perhaps his greatest legacies were in changing the way the government treats the poor and empowering thousands of people by replacing their welfare checks with paychecks. Not long ago, welfare reform was just a dream. Today, thanks in large part to Tommy Thompson, welfare reform is the law.

Tommy Thompson is one of the finest public servants in America. His commitment is matched by his courage, and his diligence is equaled by his devotion. These days, Tommy is bringing his commonsense leadership and results-oriented approach to the Department of Health and Human Services. He is leading the way as our administration works to promote the health and welfare of all Americans through greater research, new technologies, and sound science. I'm honored to have this good man as a part of my team.

So Tommy, thanks for who you are and what you do. You have made a difference in the lives of so many people in Wisconsin,

just as you are now making a difference in the lives of so many Americans.

Thank you very much, and God bless.

NOTE: The President's remarks were videotaped at approximately 4:30 p.m. on June 19 in the Library at the White House for a tribute to Tommy Thompson at the Metropolitan Milwaukee Chamber of Commerce in Milwaukee, WI, on June 21. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 21. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Dinner for Senator Jeff Sessions in Birmingham
June 21, 2001

Thank you all very much. Thank you all. Be seated. Jeff said, "Why don't you come over to Birmingham and have dinner with a couple of my buddies." [*Laughter*] I said, "Okay." I'm glad I came. Thank you for that warm welcome, and thank you for giving me the chance to be the President of the greatest Nation on the face of the Earth.

First, I'm here to urge the people of Alabama to send this good man, Jeff Sessions, back to the United States Senate. He's doing a great job. He's a solid citizen who brings integrity to the office. Plus, he's got a friend in the White House. [*Laughter*] He married well, too. [*Laughter*] It's good to be here with Mary.

I'm so sorry that my wife isn't here. I can't tell you how proud I am of Laura. She's made a big difference already in the White House. She has trained one small puppy. [*Laughter*] She keeps her husband in line. And she brings a lot of class to the Office of the First Lady, and I'm proud of her.

After I speak, I'm heading to our ranch in central Texas, where I will spend some quality time with Laura. And frankly, I'm honored to be here. I'm looking forward to sharing some wisdom—but I can't wait to get back home. [*Laughter*] Washington, DC, is a great place to work, but Texas is a great place to relax.

I'm honored to be here, as well, with the Lieutenant Governor of the State of Alabama, Steve Windom; the attorney general, Bill Pryor. I'm so pleased that my friend Bill Cabaniss is here. I want to thank the Members of the United States Congress who have traveled here with me today: the Congressman from this district, Spencer Bachus; Robert Aderholt; Terry Everett; Congressman Bob Riley; and Sonny Callahan. This is a fine delegation from Alabama who are conservative and compassionate, and I'm proud to call them friends, and you ought to be proud to call them Members of the United States Congress.

I want to thank—I don't know if Red Blount is here or not, but I spent a little time in Alabama in 1972 working for Red Blount's senatorial campaign. It's a pretty good lesson of Alabama politics. But I've made a lot of friends in this State from those days, friends that I'll never forget. And I thank you for your friendship, and I thank you for giving me a pretty good lesson on Southern politics. It paid off in the year 2000. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Mary Connors—Marty Connors, the chairman of the party; Edgar Welden and Bettye Fine Collins for their leadership for the Republican effort. Thank you all very much.

One reason I'm so nice to the Alabama delegation is because they've been steady in their votes for reform. We're making some pretty good progress in Washington, DC, about defusing the old way of doing business. The old way was, you didn't worry

about results; you just worried about how loud you yelled at somebody or how you pointed your finger. I came up to the Nation's Capital intent upon changing the tone in Washington, DC, of setting an agenda that's positive and hopeful for every American, and to working with Congress to get things done. And I'm proud to report, we are getting things done on behalf of the American people.

I was honored the other day to sign the first broad tax relief in a generation. And I want to thank the members of the Alabama congressional delegation and the two United States Senators for voting with us, to say that the American people ought to be trusted with their own money.

This was an important issue for America, because it set the stage for a new way of thinking about the budget. It said that we can meet our obligations by growing the budget at a reasonable rate. But it also recognized that the surplus is not the Government's money. The surplus is the people's money, and we ought to trust the people with their own money. So we cut rates on everybody who pays taxes.

The old way in Washington was to have what they call targeted tax cuts. That meant that folks in Washington, DC, got to say, this side of the room got tax relief, and this side didn't. But we didn't think that was fair, and we didn't think that was right. We felt that if you're going to give tax relief, everybody who paid taxes ought to get tax relief. So we reduced the rates on every taxpayer in the United States of America, and we're going to start sending out checks this July to the taxpayers of America.

We also recognize that the marriage penalty sent the wrong signals, and we mitigated the marriage penalty. And we also understood that the death tax was onerous on small businesses and ranchers and farmers in Alabama and all across the State—all across the country—so we eliminated the death tax.

And this tax relief came at the right time. Our economy is kind of sputtering a little bit, and it's important to send money back to the people so they can spend it and they can invest it to make sure our economy gets second wind. No, I was proud to do something that President John Kennedy was able to do and President Ronald Reagan was able to do, and that's to listen to the American people and to sign broad, meaningful, real tax relief. And I want to thank you, Jeff, for your support.

We're also making progress on an incredibly important issue, and that's education. I believe in short order I'm going to have the opportunity to sign one of the most far-reaching education reform bills in our Nation's history. The bill passed the House; it passed the Senate 91 to 8; it's now going to conference. And I urge the conferees not to play politics with public education in America. Get that bill out and get it to my desk so I can sign it, so that the public schools all across America can plan for next fall when they open their doors for America's children.

The education bill is important because it embodies certain principles. One principle is that it's important to set high standards, to believe that every child, regardless of background, birth, or accent can learn in America.

Secondly, it says that we must trust local people to run the schools all across America. One size does not fit all when it comes to the education of the children in America.

And thirdly, it says that if you receive Federal help—you, the State of Alabama or the State of Texas or any other State or jurisdiction must measure in return for Federal dollars—you must measure so that we as a society know whether children are being left behind.

The old, tired way of public education used to ask the question, "How old are you? And if you're 10, we'll put you in this grade, and if you're 12, we'll put you here, and if you're 14, you go there." And

guess what happened? Children would simply get shuffled through the system. Children would get moved on, regardless if they knew what they were supposed to know. And that's fundamentally wrong in America. And that's not right, and when I sign that bill, we're going to start asking this question, "What do you know? And if you do not know what you're supposed to know, we'll make sure you do early, before it's too late." There are no second-rate children in America, and there are no second-rate dreams.

Dick Cheney and I—and, by the way, the Vice President is doing a fabulous job. We said we would boost the morale of the United States military. It started with treating people better who wear the uniform. That means better pay and better housing, and the budget I submitted does just that. But it also means having a Commander in Chief who sets a clear mission for the military. The mission of the military is to be prepared to fight and win war and, therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place. Our military must be properly trained and ready to go so that the Commander in Chief, if he needs to call upon them, can do to keep the peace. Things are getting better in the military, and throughout my tenure in Washington, we will rebuild the military so that we are more likely to keep the peace.

But it also requires thinking differently as we head into the 21st century. The old way of thinking about military strategy must be addressed. Our troops need to be lighter, harder to find, more lethal when they act. And we must be prepared to deal with the true threats of the 21st century.

I had the honor of meeting with the President of Russia in Slovenia last weekend. I told him, I said, "It's time for new leadership to cast aside the old way of thinking about Russia and America." I told him, I said, "Russia is no longer our Nation's enemy. And therefore, we should not allow a treaty, signed when Russia and America were the enemy, to determine how our two nations can best come together to keep the peace."

The ABM Treaty codified a day when we were hostile to each other. It's time to come together and to think about a new security arrangement that addresses the threats of the 21st century. And the threats of the 21st century will be terrorist in nature, terror when it comes to weaponry. What we must do—freedom-loving people must be willing to think differently and develop antiballistic missile systems that will say to rogue nations and leaders who cannot stand America, or what we stand for: You will not blackmail us, nor will you blackmail our allies. It's time for new leadership when it comes to how the military thinks about keeping the peace.

Earlier this year, I put together a Commission to think differently about how our retirement systems must work. I'm deeply concerned about Social Security. I'm not concerned about those who receive Social Security today or those who are near retirement, because the Congress and the White House has taken the sacred pledge that we will not touch the Social Security, that Social Security will be spent on only one thing, Social Security.

But I'm concerned about younger workers. I worry that the Social Security System will not fulfill the promise of people who are coming up in our society. This issue requires new thinking, a new way of looking at the problem. I put together a Commission of both Republicans and Democrats charged with making sure there's a Social Security system in the future.

And a key component of that thinking says that we, as a nation, must trust younger workers to manage their own money, if they so choose, in the private markets, to take advantage of the compounding rate of return, to make sure that not only is there a Social Security system available, that workers from all walks of life have got an asset that they can call their own to pass from one generation to the next. Ownership of assets is an incredible part

of holding out hope and promise for the American Dream for every citizen. It's time to think differently in Washington, DC, about the crucial issues.

Just before we came, I had the honor of meeting many religious leaders from around the State of Alabama. I did so because I wanted to share my vision of how best to make sure the welfare system fulfills its promise. At Notre Dame a while ago, I gave a speech that talked about how our Nation can be a more compassionate country. I talked about the fact that Lyndon Johnson, at the University of Texas, gave a speech that declared a War on Poverty. I mentioned the fact that that war, noble in effort, created some consequences that our society has had to deal with. On the one hand, the welfare system that he envisioned created dependency upon Government, and on the other hand, the welfare system that he envisioned created a Government that crowded out people's aspirations to help a neighbor. People across America said, "Why should I be a compassionate neighbor? The Federal Government will solve the problem. Why should I care? The Government will take care." And what we ended up with is dependency upon Government on the one hand and complacency on the other.

In that speech, I said in 1996 the United States Congress in a bipartisan fashion passed a bill signed by my predecessor that addressed one-half of the equation. The bill and the law reduced dependency upon Government. It said that you must work, and as a result, thousands of people are now gainfully employed in America, are less dependent upon our Government. But it did not address the second half of the equation, how best to capture the great compassion of America.

I believe our Government ought to be a partner with faith-based and community-based programs. I believe it is essential we pass laws in the United States Congress that expand charitable choice, that we clearly say in America the great strength of our country lies in the hearts and souls of loving citizens. The great strength of America is in our churches and synagogues and mosques. And we must welcome faith-based programs that have got the capacity to change lives by changing hearts into the very fabric of our society.

I know I can count on Senator Sessions when the bill comes before the United States Senate. And I feel strongly I can count on the members of the congressional delegation, who have traveled with me from Washington, DC. This is an important initiative; it is an initiative that addresses our Nation's culture. It is an issue that helps us realize the full potential of America. It is an issue that recognizes that Government can hand out money, but what it cannot do is put hope in people's hearts or a sense of purpose in people's lives. It is an incredibly important issue, because our great Nation must make this dedicated promise: No person will be left behind in America, that every American counts regardless of their status, but we recognize that some hurt, some lack hope.

So what I hope to do in the Faith-Based Initiative is to call upon mentors all across the country. There is nothing more meaningful and important than, say, for a child whose parent may be in prison, to have an arm of an adult or a loving soul say, "I love you, brother." America means as much for you as it does for me and my children.

A Faith-Based Initiative understands that in order to solve the problems of those hooked on alcohol and drugs, that sometimes the only way is to call upon a higher being. The Faith-Based Initiative recognizes the power of faith and hope in America. And I urge Congress not to get stuck on the process but to focus on results so that we can change America in an incredibly positive, hopeful, and optimistic way.

That's really the job of the President. The job of the President is to lift the Nation's spirit.

On my wall in the Oval Office is a picture of Abraham Lincoln. I hang that portrait because it reminds me my job is to unify our Nation. I recognize we will have differences when it comes to tax policy and education policy, but the job of the President is obviously to stand on principle and to fight for legislative matters that I think are important. But it's also to unite America, to unite the country around the fantastic values that make us unique, the values of freedom: freedom to speak your mind, freedom to worship where you want, freedom of the press to occasionally say something that I don't agree with—[*laughter*]—freedom—freedom to express yourself at the ballot box, freedom to be anything you dream to be in America, regardless of your birth or where you're from. Those values set us aside as a nation. They are incredibly important values.

But uniting the Nation understands and—begins with the understanding of responsibility of the offices we hold. I admire Jeff Sessions because he understands. He has the responsibility not only to represent the great State of Alabama, but he has the responsibility to uphold the honor and dignity of the office to which he has been elected. And he will not let the people of Alabama down.

I love traveling outside of Washington. Listen, I like my job, and the public housing is pretty darn good there. [*Laughter*] But I love to come out to the countryside. I can't thank the people of Alabama enough for lining the roads. We went to an initiative today in one of the parks outside of Birmingham, where I was able to say that this administration, for the first time, is going to fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund, so that the people of Alabama will be able to make the conservation decisions necessary for the great State of Alabama. But as we traveled the road, hundreds of people lined the road to wave and to hold up signs encouraging the President.

It reminds me of what I said earlier and I truly believe: I am blessed to be the President of a nation full of decent and loving and caring and compassionate people, people who respect their country, respect the office of the Presidency—sometimes like the President, sometimes not—but respect the office of the President, who care deeply about the future, who love their families, who worship in houses of worship, and are proud to call themselves American.

I can't tell you what an honor it is to have recently traveled overseas and to stand proudly for a country that represents the best of mankind, that holds up the best for every single citizen. I'm so honored to be here to represent and to urge you to support my friend. And I am honored to tell you, I love being your President, and thank you for the opportunity.

God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:40 p.m. at the Jefferson Convention Complex. In his remarks, he referred to Mary Sessions, wife of Senator Sessions; William Cabaniss, finance chair, Alabama Bush 2000 campaign; Winton M. "Red" Blount, founder, Blount International, Inc.; Marty Connors, chairman, Alabama Republican Party; Edgar Welden and Bettye Fine Collins, national committee persons, Alabama Republican Executive Committee; and President Vladimir Putin of Russia.

The President's Radio Address
June 23, 2001

Good morning. Here in Washington, we are nearing some important decisions on the health of Americans. Congress will soon vote on a Patients' Bill of Rights to help patients get the treatment they deserve without delay or legal haggling. I want that bill to be strong and effective.

A woman should be able to visit her gynecologist, and parents, their children's pediatrician, without going through a gatekeeper. A person should be able to see a specialist when he or she needs one and to get emergency treatment at the nearest emergency room.

If an HMO denies the treatment you need, then you should have the right to an immediate, impartial appeal to a panel of doctors. If the panel rules in your favor, you should receive your treatment, period. If the HMO ignores the findings, you should be able to go to court. The system should not favor HMOs, and it should not favor trial lawyers; it should favor patients with quick action to make sure they get the treatment they need.

Today I want to address another kind of protection that is needed in these times of accelerating medical progress. Just a few months ago scientists completed the mapping of the human genome. With this information comes enormous possibilities for doing good. Through a better understanding of the genetic codes, scientists might one day be able to cure and prevent countless diseases.

As with any other power, however, this knowledge of the code of life has the potential to be abused. Employers could be tempted to deny a job based on a person's genetic profile. Insurance companies might use that information to deny an application for coverage or charge excessive premiums.

Genetic discrimination is unfair to workers and their families. It is unjustified, among other reasons, because it involves little more than medical speculation. A genetic predisposition toward cancer or heart disease does not mean the condition will develop. To deny employment or insurance to a healthy person based only on a predisposition violates our country's belief in equal treatment and individual merit.

In the past, other forms of discrimination have been used to withhold rights and opportunities that belong to all Americans. Just as we have addressed discrimination based on race, gender, and age, we must now prevent discrimination based on genetic information. My administration is working now to shape the legislation that will make genetic discrimination illegal.

I look forward to working with Members of Congress to pass a law that is fair, reasonable, and consistent with existing discrimination statutes. We will all gain much from the continuing advances of genetic science. But those advances should never come at the cost of basic fairness and equality under law.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9 a.m. on June 21 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on June 23. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 22 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of the address.

Remarks to the United States Conference of Mayors in Detroit, Michigan
June 25, 2001

Well, thank you all very much. Thanks. Please be seated. Well, Victor, thank you very much. I appreciate your kind remarks.

Before I begin, I'd like to introduce the First Lady. She and I are coming up from Crawford, Texas, on our way back to the Nation's Capital, and we're so honored that you all would welcome us here: Laura Bush.

Traveling with me, as well, is the Secretary of Labor, Elaine Chao, the FEMA Director, Joe Allbaugh. I hope you don't have to call him. [*Laughter*] But if you do, I can assure you, he'll be responsive.

I'm honored to be here with my friend the Governor of Michigan and Michelle Engler. I appreciate, Brent, so much, seeing you again, and I thank all the mayors for your hospitality.

Traveling with me, as well, are members of the United States congressional delegation: Tony Hall, J.C. Watts, Joe Knollenberg, Jim Ramstad, and right here from her own district, Carolyn Kilpatrick. I also had the pleasure of meeting and visiting with the newest mayor on the block, Mayor Jim Hahn of Los Angeles.

It's good to see the mayors from the great State of Texas. I see the mayor from Fort Worth and the mayor from Dallas. I suspect the mayor from Houston is somewhere around here—oh, there he is. Hi, Lee. Thank you all very much. There's another mayor—thank you, Mayor. I remember you. I hope you remember me. [*Laughter*] It's good to see you all.

I also want to thank the mayor of Detroit for his hospitality. I'm reminded of what President Kennedy said about Columbus, Ohio. He said, "There's no city in America where I get a warmer welcome and receive less votes." [*Laughter*] I think because of that, the mayor likes me—and in spite of that, I like the mayor. [*Laughter*]

Detroit was the site of this organization's birth, 69 years ago, when Mayor Frank Murphy and 29 of his colleagues met here in this city. In that year, in 1932, one-third of Americans were unemployed; food lines stretched for blocks; nearly 40 percent of America's banks had failed. Today, the story is very different. American cities are once again a magnet for ambition and culture and enterprise. The welfare rolls are down. In some places, crime rates have fallen to what they were in the mid-1960s. Problems that once seemed hopeless have yielded to reform and good sense, and the mayors of America deserve much of the credit.

Yet, as we all know, tremendous challenges still remain. Too many children, through no fault of their own, are in families without fathers and neighborhoods without opportunity. Too many young people drop out of school, drop out of the labor force, and end up in prisons. Too many men and women wander alone in the twilight of addiction, illiteracy, and mental illness.

These problems seem immune to our affluence. We're not in a post-poverty America. The challenges we face are different than they were in the 1930s, and we must recognize new challenges demand new approaches. I realize that many of you are doing an outstanding job of dealing with these problems and that the burden cannot fall upon you alone. The Federal Government should take your side. The cities and communities of America need to be empowered, not regimented. And this is my firm commitment to you, the mayors.

The agenda is long and very important. Equal opportunity is an empty hope without good schools. So the education reform legislation passed by both the House and

the Senate spreads power to local communities and, for the first time, demands results in return. It's time to act when we find that children who graduate from high school have only an eighth grade education. He's been betrayed by the adult world, and we must end that betrayal by having high expectations, strong accountability systems, and the resources necessary to make sure that not one child gets left behind in America.

In the aftermath of successful welfare reform, we must turn to the problems of the working poor, especially the newly working poor. We're encouraging homeownership by providing tax credits to investors to redevelop and build new single-family homes. We're facilitating homeownership for low-income families by allowing them to consolidate a year's worth of Section 8 assistance for a downpayment on a home.

We believe owning something is a part of the American future. We want all people, regardless of background, to be able to claim a home of their own in America. I can't think of anything better to help revitalize the neighborhoods in America's cities.

We must actively work to fill the gaps in the health care system for the working poor. That's why the budget I've sent up to Congress provides resources to expand significantly the number of community health centers to make sure that all folks have got an opportunity for good primary care, and proposes a new tax credit for those who have difficulty affording health insurance.

I'm convinced that we can make progress on the important issues. Today I want to focus on one in particular: supporting the good works of charities and neighborhood healers, empowering communities to meet their own needs and to care for their own members.

In every city, there are people who mentor and tutor, who give shelter to battered women and children, who teach biological fathers to be real and caring fathers, who help young people find jobs and avoid violence, who confront—who comfort the aged and help the dying, who picket crackhouses, who walk into gunfire to end gang wars. These good people don't lack compassion. They certainly don't lack courage. They don't lack commitment and spiritual strength. But often they lack resources. And I believe government, where it can, should stand side by side and to help them.

This belief isn't owned by Republicans or Democrats. It doesn't fit into neat, ideological categories. It demands an active government to support the good works of others, an active government to spread resources and authority beyond government entirely.

In articulating his philosophy of how to aid American cities, Robert Kennedy said, "There must be an overriding theme and goal: the involvement of the community, of those who have the greatest stake in the quality of the services they receive." He spoke about putting community at the center of all our policy. He said, "Government back to the people of the neighborhood." I agree. In the 21st century, we should bring government back to the people who have a powerful sense of mission and idealism, back to people who know the needs of neighbors, back to people committed to rebuilding their communities from the inside out.

These committed men and women take the side of hope and compassion. And we must take their side. We must help those in need, and we must encourage people to be good citizens instead of bystanders. So I'm pleased that more than 150 mayors' offices across the country are launching their own efforts to encourage faith and community initiatives in partnership with the White House.

I'm honored the U.S. Conference of Mayors has strongly endorsed my administration's Faith-Based and Community Initiative. I'm extremely proud to announce that Rosa Parks, a monumental figure in

the civil rights movement, has endorsed the initiative. These are unprecedented votes of confidence. They're important steps in our efforts to bring healing and hope to those in need.

I'm excited about this approach, yet, I'm under no illusions. I know government cannot be replaced by charities. The best mentoring program will never be a substitute for Medicaid for poor children. The best effort to renovate housing will never be a substitute for fair-housing laws. Charities and community groups cannot do everything. But we strongly believe they can do more. We must find creative ways to expand their size and increase their number. And now is the time to start.

I proposed a new initiative to mentor the children of prisoners, so they are not further punished for the sins of their parents. I have proposed expanding federally funded after-school programs, so that faith-based and community-based programs can access that money. I proposed a Responsible Fatherhood Initiative, aiding community groups that seek to strengthen the role of fathers in the lives of families.

And soon, the United States House of Representatives will act on H.R. 7, the "Community Solutions Act," sponsored by Republican J.C. Watts and Democrat Tony Hall. The bill contains important elements of the Faith-Based and Community Initiative, and I hope you'll make your support of this legislation known to the skeptics in the United States Senate and to the United States House. H.R. 7 expands individual development accounts, which provide a way for charities, government, and business to help struggling families find the security of assets and the dignity of independence.

The bill allows non-itemizing Federal taxpayers to join itemizers in deducting their charitable contributions, a step that should encourage new charitable giving all across America. The "Community Solution Act" also expands charitable choice, the principle already established in Federal law that faith-based organizations should be able to compete for Government funds without being forced to hide their religious character.

We recognize that the funds will be spent on social services, not worship services. And we recognize there must be secular alternatives for those who wish to use the services. We respect the separation of church and state and the constitutional rights of religious people. But the days of discriminating against religious institutions simply because they are religious must come to an end if we want to heal America.

As you know, many community groups are not religious in nature. Their employees and volunteers are motivated by kind hearts and moral convictions. Yet, many acts of charity and social justice are also the acts of faith. And in our cities, they are often associated with African American churches. More than 70 percent of African American churches engage in community outreach programs, including daycare, job search, substance abuse prevention, food and clothing distribution. They're far more likely to apply for public funds for their social programs than other churches. And the people who most often benefit from the outreach efforts of these African American churches are poor children who are not affiliated with any church at all. In some places, African American churches are the only institutions that hold the fraying strands of a community together. And their work should be praised and welcomed and encouraged.

I've heard the voices, and so have you, the critics who are concerned about supporting good works, motivated by strong faith. I suggest they go to the cities to see the need and to see the hope. I suggest they talk to the forward-thinking mayors, mayors who are on the frontline, who work closely with faith and community organizations, who are witnesses to the power of this approach.

Your witness is in Philadelphia, where Mayor John Street supports the Amachi program, directed by former Mayor Wilson

Goode, which recruits mentors to care for the children of prisoners.

Your witness is in Orlando, where earlier this month Mayor Glenda Hood announced her faith-based and community matching grants program. That program focuses on funding youth and family projects that contribute to civic responsibility and character development.

Your witness is in Indianapolis, where my good friend Steve Goldsmith, when he was the mayor, pioneered the Front Porch Alliance, a partnership between city hall and the values shaping institutions in Indianapolis that helped transform this city. And thank you for being here today, Steve.

You know that childcare vouchers are used at houses of worship. You know the Head Start Programs are often found in religious settings. You know that many public services in our cities are provided through Catholic Charities or the Salvation Army. You know that many Government dollars in Medicaid and Medicare are used in religious hospitals. In all these cases, we are funding the good works of the faithful, not faith itself. Do the critics of this approach really want to end these programs? I certainly hope not. It would be bad for America.

I understand, mayors, my administration did not invent the idea of community empowerment. But along with you, we're going to build on it. Together, we're going to convince the skeptics. Together, we're going to put the Federal Government and local government squarely on the side of America's armies of compassion.

There are great stories in every great city, stories of grand ambition and immigrant enterprise and cultural achievement. There are also stories of suffering, redeemed by hope and faith, and we should listen to those stories as well.

The Brightmore neighborhood in northwest Detroit can be a tough place to grow up. Some people even ask, "Can anything good come out of Brightmore?" Well, it turns out that much good does come out of that neighborhood. At Rosedale Park Baptist Church, a group of young men and women have committed their lives to bringing hope to young African Americans. And one of the young men they've helped is Demarco Howard.

Demarco's dad had been in prison since he was a baby. His mom was addicted to drugs and was unable to raise him, so his aunt took on the responsibility, and she did the very best job she could possibly do. But life was tough. Demarco was shot when he was 6 and spent a year in the hospital recovering. He was often in trouble, and at the age of 14 was arrested and sent to a juvenile detention facility. At that facility, Demarco met someone on the staff of Rosedale Park Baptist Church. Demarco began attending Bible study classes, and his life began to change in dramatic ways.

He goes to school; he does his homework; he goes to church; and he volunteers to help other kids in trouble. I had a chance to look Demarco in the eye and thank him for his leadership, and asked him how life was. And he said, "It's getting a lot better, Mr. President." Thank you for coming, Demarco.

America can be saved, one heart, one soul, one conscience at a time. The pastor of Rosedale, Dennis Talbert, is fond of quoting a passage from the Book of Romans: "When I want to do good, evil is right there with me." That accurately describes the situation of many of our children in America. Evil is what his church is fighting against, with impressive results. And it's worth noting that Rosedale's outreach programs are financially supported by the Department of Justice and Michigan's Family Independence Agency, among others, and it shows what is possible.

Stories like these are being written all across America, and it's the goal of this administration to praise them at every chance and to replicate them where we can. I hope you continue your good works as mayors. You're on the frontline. At least in Washington, we don't have to worry

about how the garbage gets emptied. [*Laughter*] But at least in Washington—we can work in Washington to make sure the garbage gets changed. We can make sure that we think differently about the problems that confront us. We can make sure we ask the question, "What are the results," not "What is the process?" And together, we can rally the great compassion and faith and hope of America.

Thank you for what you do, and thank you for giving me the chance to come by and say hello. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:19 p.m. in the Columbus Ballroom at the Detroit Marriott Renaissance Center. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Victor Ashe of Knoxville, TN, past president, and Mayor H. Brent Coles of Boise, ID, president, U.S. Conference of Mayors; Gov. John Engler of Michigan; Michelle Engler, wife of Governor Engler; Mayor Ronald Kirk of Dallas, TX; Mayor Kenneth L. Barr of Fort Worth, TX; Mayor Lee P. Brown of Houston, TX; and Mayor Dennis W. Archer of Detroit, MI.

Remarks at a Ceremony Honoring Presidential Scholars
June 25, 2001

Thank you very much. Okay, sit down. [*Laughter*] Except for you all. [*Laughter*] Mr. Secretary, thank you. The good folks from Houston know what I'm about to tell you is true. First of all, behave yourself. [*Laughter*] And secondly, I picked a true leader to run the Department of Education when I picked Rod Paige. He did a great job as the superintendent in Houston. He's a no-nonsense kind of guy, you know, and he's getting a lot done. And I'm honored to have you here.

And Bruno, thank you very much. As the Chairman, I appreciate your leadership. And I want to thank all the members on the Commission. Thank you for taking time out of your private lives to herald the best of America. I want to thank the Members of the United States Congress who are here. I understand John Hostettler is here from Indiana and George Nethercutt from Washington and Bernie Sanders from the State of Vermont. I think they're here. Thank you all for coming.

It's an honor for me to be here to honor some of America's finest students. You all should be proud of this award, and you should know your country is proud of you. Congratulations.

Out of an applicant pool of over 2,700 exceptional students, 141 were chosen. While your excellence ranges from science to the arts, all of you share some common traits of character: hard work, commitment, leadership, faith in yourself, and service to others. You represent the best of your generation, and I'm confident you'll do great things for our great Nation.

You've earned your place here today, but you did not do it alone. First, we want to thank the parents and family members who worked side by side with you. I want to thank you for your commitment to your kids and to their excellence.

And I want to thank the teachers who join us here today. A good teacher is a model and a mentor, a source of praise and a source of challenge. A good teacher can change a life. A generation of good teachers can change a nation. Our Nation deeply respects your important work, and thank you for being here.

You all have come to Washington in an historic time: The Congress is about to pass the most important education reform in nearly 40 years. Every school, with students of every income, will be expected to meet high standards of learning and literacy.

Every school will get the flexibility and help it needs to meet those standards. And every student will be tested to make sure those standards are actually achieved.

The longer it takes Congress to pass these important reforms, the less time State policymakers, school boards, principals, and teachers will have to act on them. I urge the Congress to act now, before it is too late.

Thirty-seven years ago, when President Johnson honored the first Presidential Scholars, Congress was debating the historic Civil Rights Act of 1964. Now, as you receive your awards, Congress is debating the next frontier of civil rights: solid education—because I believe the better we educate all our children, the more united our society will be, the more equal we'll become in hope and opportunity and in achievement.

Excellence in education is a matter of standards and talent, and it is also a matter of character. We all need high ambitions. But it is strong values that give dignity and direction to our lives. And here, as in other areas, the young folks in this room excel.

Marco Ramirez of Florida—say hello to the Governor for me—[*laughter*]—is being honored for his talents as a playwright. Yet, Marco also found a way to translate his love of theater into service. He gave a Halloween party for 200 children in a crime-ridden neighborhood, allowing them to enjoy the holiday in the safety of a school.

Or another honoree, Dean Spears of Oklahoma, shared his love of learning with residents of a local nursing home, out of concern that they did not have enough ways to exercise their minds. After securing a space at the nursing home for a library, Dean advertised his project to the community. The library now has over 1,600 books, each labeled and catalogued by Dean, himself.

Our society needs your contributions. During my lifetime I've seen the culture change from one that emphasized the difference between right and wrong to one that says, "If it feels good, do it," and "If you have a problem, blame somebody else." But I believe culture can change, and it changes as a result of leadership. And the young folks on this stage today are leaders by, first and foremost, taking responsibility of their own lives and listening to that universal call to love a neighbor just like they'd like to be loved themselves.

Sometimes it's said that this generation is self-absorbed and apathetic. Your achievements and good works and generous spirit, especially at such a young age, make your friends and family proud. I want to thank you for your contribution you make to our Nation today and urge you on, because the contributions you'll make tomorrow will be just as important.

Welcome to Washington. Congratulations, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:33 p.m. at Constitution Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Bruno V. Manno, chairman, White House Commission on Presidential Scholars, and Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida.

Remarks Honoring the 2001 NCAA Women's Hockey Champion University of Minnesota Duluth Bulldogs

June 25, 2001

Please be seated. Well, thank you very much. Welcome to the White House. Kathryn, thank you for coming and bringing this group of champs with you. It's good to welcome the coach, the captain of the team, who I understand is the only senior

on the team. I'd hate to be the opposition for the University of Minnesota Duluth next year. [*Laughter*]

It is my honor to welcome to the White House the Senators from the State of Minnesota: Senator Wellstone, welcome; and Senator Mark Dayton—many of you don't know this, that he was a fine goalie when he played at Yale University. I know because I witnessed him in the nets. However, having seen some of the replays of the champions' games, Mark, I'm afraid you couldn't have stopped many of the shots coming from these champs. [*Laughter*]

It's good to have the Members of the United States Congress here, too: Jim Oberstar, thank you for coming; and Jim Ramstad, thank you, sir. I appreciate you all being here.

It is my honor to welcome the first-ever team from the University of Minnesota Duluth to the White House. The mighty Bulldogs accomplished an extraordinary feat by winning the first NCAA women hockey championship in only the second season of their existence. That's pretty darn good.

What makes this team special is its international character. Players from Europe, Canada, and the United States all worked together to become champs. As Coach Miller said, it took a perfect mix of players from all over to win the title. But I know something about sports; it also takes a great coach to win a title, too, and this team has got an extraordinary coach. She's had great success with the Canadian national team, before our great Nation borrowed her to lead the Bulldogs. [*Laughter*] Her name is associated with a spectacular rise in women's hockey. And she served as a role model for all the champs.

Coach Miller, congratulations.

I want to thank some of the girls from the Washington, DC, area who are here, as well. I see members of the Best Friends, Brownies, and Girl Scouts. Thank you for coming. It reminds me of what a true champ is. A champ is somebody who wins not only in the ice but who, when off the ice, sets a good example for youngsters to follow. What champs do is they set high standards, and they work hard, and they make the right choices to achieve those standards and goals. And that's exactly what the University of Minnesota Duluth did. You set the highest of standards.

I know you worked hard. I bet you made sure they worked hard. [*Laughter*] Your team made the right choices off the ice, and that's why they're champs. And so I want to congratulate you all for setting the right example.

For those of you who aren't from the United States, hang around; it's a pretty special place. [*Laughter*] But we welcome you here. We welcome you to the greatest house in our country, the people's house, and congratulate you from the bottom of our hearts.

Congratulations.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:45 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Kathryn A. Martin, chancellor, Shannon Miller, women's hockey coach, and Brittny Ralph, women's hockey team captain, University of Minnesota Duluth.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa and an Exchange With Reporters

June 26, 2001

President Bush. It is my honor to welcome the President Mbeki to the Oval Office. It's good to see you again, sir. The last time we visited was in the Governor's

Mansion in Texas. We had a great discussion about our country's relations. I look forward to furthering that discussion.

We have a lot of interests that—to discuss. We have the interest of trade and prosperity. My administration has made a commitment to work with leaders like President Mbeki on the continent of Africa to provide hope for people. And we look forward to a great relationship with you, sir. You've provided imaginative, real leadership that a lot of people in this Nation admire, and our relationship is only going to grow stronger as a result of your visit here.

So we welcome you to the United States. We welcome the dialog we'll have here in the Oval Office and then over lunch with the respective delegations.

Mr. President.

President Mbeki. Thank you very much, Mr. President. Let me say, thank you very much, indeed, Mr. President, for giving us the opportunity to see you. I've been looking forward to this, because for us, Mr. President, our relations with the United States are very important.

You know the challenges we face in South Africa, Mr. President, and the challenges we face on the African Continent. And quite clearly, we need your support and involvement in order to solve those problems.

I'm happy we are able to meet today so we can look, as you said, Mr. President, at the matter of the bilateral relations, as well as what we might do on the wider scale. And I think that, Mr. President, the moment has come for us, as Africans, really to turn the corner, to deal with all of these problems of violence and conflict and poverty, disease, and so on.

And I've been very, very pleased—I must say this, Mr. President—that what we discussed in Austin, Texas, about what might be done, that you have kept to that particular route, those present agreements, with some understandings, has been very inspiring to us. And I'm sure that this visit will help us to get along, as we definitely need to.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

President Bush. Thank you. I'm so glad you're here. Thanks.

HIV/AIDS

Q. Mr. President, neither of you have mentioned the AIDS scourge directly in your opening statements here. How high on the list of priorities for discussing the scourge is this on your agenda?

President Bush. Well, it's an incredibly important part of our dialog. The AIDS pandemic in Africa is terrible, and our Nation intends to do something about it. As a matter of fact, our Nation is doing something about it. We provide more money than any nation in the world to fund a strategy to defeat AIDS, and we will continue to work with nations that can afford to put money into the trust to do so.

I was so pleased to see—not only to announce that our Government put money into an international trust, but the Gates Foundation, a private foundation here in America, contributed $100 million. And yesterday Tommy Thompson and Colin Powell went to the U.N. to discuss this important issue. And we will discuss it, and we'll discuss it in depth, just like we did in Austin, Texas. The President is concerned, as am I.

I discussed it in Europe. I talked to the Europeans. I said, "We've made a downpayment into the international trust to battle AIDS." They should contribute, I said. And I hope they do. I hope the European Union will follow suit. Part of our discussion that night in Sweden was the United States taking the lead in the AIDS pandemic, not only in the continent of Africa but around the world. And this is a big issue, as far as we're concerned. We've got to do something about it.

Mr. President.

President Mbeki. Yes, indeed, as the President says, we actually did discuss this matter, even then, last year in May, when

we met in Texas. It clearly is an important matter. That's why I mentioned the matter of diseases on the African Continent. AIDS, indeed, is one of those.

We have to respond in a comprehensive way. One of the matters we'll discuss with the President is this African recovery program that we're working on. And one of the major priority areas in that African recovery program is precisely this area.

So we certainly will discuss this. And we have to do something, because in many instances, these are diseases which are not only caused by poverty, some of them, but also cause poverty. So if you're talking about an African recovery, you cannot but discuss AIDS and really confront it. Malaria, tuberculosis, all sorts of communicable diseases are a particular matter of what has to happen—we have to address them.

South African Government's Response to AIDS

Q. Mr. President, President Mbeki, last week the New York Times published an editorial accusing your government of, in its words, dooming half a generation of young people to an early, protracted, and expensive death because of its failure to distribute anti-retrovirals. How do you explain the amount of criticism that you're coming in for in the United States for what is a perception that you're not doing enough on HIV?

President Mbeki. Well, I'll—we've said—all I would say to that, really, is that people must look at what we're doing in South Africa, not their perception of what they think we're doing but what we're doing actually in the country. And I don't think on the basics of facts an accusation like that can be sustained.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:27 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and President Thabo Mbeki *June 26, 2001*

President Bush and President Mbeki committed to build on and strengthen the already excellent ties between the United States and South Africa. We committed ourselves to achieving our shared goals of building a stronger strategic partnership and promoting economic growth and democracy in Africa and globally.

We reaffirmed that our governments will meet regularly, to consult on bilateral, regional, and multilateral issues of shared importance, and that ongoing cooperative efforts, begun under the direction of the Binational Commission, shall continue and be enhanced in the critical areas of agriculture; conservation, environment, and water; defense; health; housing; human resource development and education; justice and anti-crime; science and technology; sustainable energy; and trade and investment. We will establish a joint secretariat to direct and coordinate the consultations and to provide recommendations to both governments.

We discussed the Millennium Africa Recovery Program (MAP) and agreed to work together for a prosperous, democratic Africa. We affirmed our support for the MAP's core goals of conflict resolution, good governance, sound economic management, and fighting HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases.

We affirmed that additional efforts to combat the devastating effects of HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases are urgently needed, and we renewed our commitment to working together against them and the conditions that enable the diseases to proliferate. We agreed to support the establishment and funding of the global trust fund for HIV/AIDS and other diseases as a unique public-private partnership to bring needed resources to the battle against these diseases through a multi-sector, integrated strategy.

We pledged to work together to support the launching of a new round of World Trade Organization negotiations and affirmed that we have many common interests, in particular the growth of agricultural trade and a shared commitment to working together to bridge the digital divide in Africa. Likewise, we confirmed our satisfaction that the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) has produced positive results in South Africa, and has already led to expanded trade and investment between the two countries.

We affirmed our mutual desire for a peaceful, democratic, prosperous Zimbabwe, in which human rights and rule of law are respected. We agreed that a dialogue between the Government of Angola and UNITA rebels on implementing the Lusaka Protocol offers the best promise for peace. We affirmed our commitment to progress toward resolving the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DROC) and agreed to cooperate on conflict resolution efforts throughout Africa.

President Bush looks forward to the opportunity to visit South Africa as part of the effort to continue building and fostering the growth of our bilateral relationship and promoting our shared agenda.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Remarks at the Swearing-In Ceremony for Howard H. Baker, Jr., as Ambassador to Japan

June 26, 2001

Senator Baker, you've drawn quite a crowd here to the White House. [*Laughter*] Mr. Vice President; Mr. Secretary; CIA Director George Tenet, I believe, is here. Justice O'Connor is here. Thank you so much for coming. The Ambassador from Japan is here. Thank you very much for being here, Mr. Ambassador, and your lovely wife. Madeleine Albright, I believe, is here—Madam Secretary. Larry Eagleburger is here. Elizabeth Dole, I believe, is here. Senator, Elizabeth, thank you very much. The former Ambassadors to the country of Japan are on the stage with us; they have been introduced. Members of the United States Senate are here. Members of the Tennessee congressional delegation are here.

Thank you all for coming, and welcome. Today we call upon one of America's most valued statesmen to help be the keeper of one of America's most valued friendships. Howard Baker has held many titles during the course of his long and distinguished career. They include sailor, Senator, minority leader, majority leader, and White House Chief of Staff. In a few moments he'll add Ambassador to that list, and once again, America is very grateful.

All the former Ambassadors here are living examples of the very highest standards of diplomatic excellence. And between them, Mike Mansfield, Walter Mondale,

Tom Foley, and Howard Baker have accumulated over 100 years of elected office. [*Laughter*] That's a lot of balloon drops. [*Laughter*]

Thirty-four of those years are accounted for by Mike Mansfield alone. The Senator began the tradition of high-level political figures serving as our Ambassador to Japan. He held that post for more than 11 years, longer than anyone else. Japanese press calls these figures *o-mono*—the big guys. [*Laughter*] Well, we're all very honored to have the original big guy with us.

And by the way, Senator Thurmond, he informed me—with quite clear language—that he is 4 months younger than you are. [*Laughter*]

We send the very best people to Japan because the United States has no more important partner in the world than Japan. Our alliance is rooted in the vital strategic and economic interests that we share. It is the cornerstone of peace and prosperity in Asia. Today, this partnership is helping us tackle global problems, as well.

I'm looking forward to welcoming the Prime Minister this weekend at Camp David. Together, we will explore ways we can continue to strengthen our security relationship. We will talk about the Prime Minister's agenda for reforming and revitalizing the Japanese economy. We'll discuss how our countries can work together on realistic and effective responses to global problems such as AIDS in Africa and climate change.

I will also tell the Prime Minister that America's 38th Ambassador to Japan is a man of extraordinary ability, grace, and good humor. In every post he has held, Howard Baker has brought uncommon intelligence and an uncanny ability to calm the ship of state, even in days of crisis.

He comes from good stock. His grandmother, Lillie "Mother Ladd" Mauser—[*laughter*]—was Tennessee's first woman sheriff. [*Laughter*] His father and his stepmother both served in the House. He married into good stock, as well. He counts Senator Everett Dirksen and the grand old man of the Grand Old Party, Alf Landon, as fathers-in-law. And what the Prime Minister is going to find out, he took an extraordinary woman as a bride in Senator Nancy Kassebaum Baker.

In the Senate, Howard Baker had a list of rules for being an effective Senator. He called it the Baker's Dozen. The list included: listen more often than you speak; be patient; tell the truth, whether you have to or not; and finally, be civil and encourage others to do the same.

Well, these rules help explain why Howard Baker has made such a mark on American history. They are why he's going to keep making his mark for the years to come.

Congratulations.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:48 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Shunji Yanai, Japanese Ambassador to the United States, and his wife, Toshiko; former Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright; former Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence S. Eagleburger; former Senator Bob Dole and his wife, former Transportation Secretary Elizabeth Dole; and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Ambassador Baker.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel and an Exchange With Reporters
June 26, 2001

President Bush. It's my honor to welcome back to the Oval Office Prime Minister Sharon. He is a leader who has faced extraordinary circumstances in the Middle East. I believe he's shown patience and is willing to lead. I understand the pressures he is under.

Today it's my opportunity to once again look him in the eye and tell him he's got no better friend than the United States and, as well, tell him that we all must work to break the cycle of violence so that we can begin the process of implementing the Mitchell agreement. Our fervent hope in this Nation is that there is peace in the Middle East.

And I'm so honored you came back, Mr. Prime Minister, and I look forward to having the discussion with you that—it will be an add-on to the great discussion we had the last time you were here.

Welcome.

Prime Minister Sharon. Thank you, Mr. President. I'm very glad to be here again. Israel is committed to peace, will make every effort to reach peace. Peace should be peace for generations, and peace should provide security to the Israeli citizens.

The Jewish people are having one tiny, small country, that is Israel—[*inaudible*]—would have the right and the capability to defend themselves by themselves. And that, of course, we have to preserve, and we have to thank God for that every day.

We are committed to the Mitchell report in its sequence, according to sequence. We adopted the Mitchell report, and we received Tenet document—Tenet plan. And we'll be willing to continue. The one thing that we are looking for is, first of all, it would be full cessation of hostilities, of terror, and incitement. If that would happen, I am fully convinced that the day will come, and we'll have peace in the Middle East.

I would like to thank Mr. President again for coming here. We regard your administration to be a very friendly one, and we would like to thank you for that.

President Bush. And as you know, Mr. Prime Minister, our Secretary of State leaves tonight for the Middle East, and our fervent hope is to advance the process for making sure there's peace in that part of the world.

We'll be glad to answer a question apiece.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. Mr. President, do you expect Prime Minister Sharon—do you expect Prime Minister Sharon to negotiate under fire, Mr. President?

White House Aide. Mr. Fournier of the Associated Press.

Q. Mr. President, the same question to both of you. Do you think it is possible—do you think it's appropriate to move to the next step in the Mitchell report? They call for a cooling-off period even before there's a full cessation of violence.

President Bush. I think that there has to be. The cycle of violence must be broken. I look forward to discussing with the Prime Minister about what's realistic and what's possible. But we both believe that it is possible if there's a strong effort made by both parties to break the cycle of violence.

Mitchell says it's a sequential process. Step one is to break the cycle. And we have been on the phone with all parties—all the time it seems like—urging the cycle of violence to be broken. And progress is being made. I am here to tell the Prime Minister, I know there's a level of frustration, but there is progress being made. And for that progress, we are grateful.

The Prime Minister has shown a lot of patience in the midst of a lot of—in the midst of casualty. But progress is being made. Is it as fast as we'd like? No, it's not. But the fundamental question my administration makes is, are we making progress; is peace closer today than it was yesterday? We believe the answer is yes.

And therefore, the Secretary of State leaves tonight to try to advance the process, to make peace more real. And he's going to meet not only with the Israelis; he'll be meeting with the Palestinians, as well; urging—urging the cycle of violence to be broken.

Q. The question to both of you, though, is, can we move to step two now, even though there is not a complete end to violence?

President Bush. We're going to discuss all opportunities today, in the meeting today. If I didn't think progress is being made, I would not be sending the Secretary of State to the Middle East. We believe we have a further opportunity to advance the peace process. This is an important statement of the progress that's being made. So the Secretary of State leaves tonight to continue working hard to break the cycle of violence.

Both parties will understand when the level of violence has gotten down to the point where there can be some progress. We just want to make sure that there's a realistic assessment of what is possible on the ground. And we believe that at some point in time, we can start the process of Mitchell.

Prime Minister Sharon. Thank you. First of all, I would like to wish to Secretary of State Colin Powell success in his trip to the Middle East. I know that he, like the President, makes a major effort to bring security and peace in the Middle East.

Israel's position is that we can negotiate only, and we would like to negotiate only when it will be full cessation of hostilities, terror, violence, and incitement. Otherwise, I don't think we'd be able to reach a peace which will really make all of us committed to.

One must understand that if last week we had 5 dead, it's like the United States, Mr. President, having 250 killed, or maybe even 300 people killed by terror. And that is saying that one should not compromise with terror. And therefore, I believe that if we stick to what we have been saying for so many times, such a long time—that it should be full cessation of terror before we move to the other phase—then our neighbors will understand that they have to do it.

Q. Mr. Prime Minister—[*inaudible*]—also ready for a full freeze of settlements?

Q. Mr. President, how can we——

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, do you see any signs that Yasser Arafat stopped the violence and is willing to go to peace with Israel?

Q. [*Inaudible*]—peace timetable says——

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, do you see any progress on Arafat's side?

Israeli Embassy Spokesman. Israeli Television, go.

Q. Mr. President, you said that we——

President Bush. Whew! Man. [*Laughter*] I don't know if they wore you out, but I'm certainly worn out. [*Laughter*] Go on.

Prime Minister Sharon. [*Inaudible*]—asked by American television——

President Bush. I don't know, but Gregory [David Gregory, NBC News] looks like he's got one on the tip of your tongue. That's right. [*Laughter*]

Q. Mr. President, you said that we should be realistic. Don't you think it's a price for terrorists, for terrorism, if right now the United States will force Israel to begin the cooling-off period? We see that in the field the hostilities continue.

President Bush. Any terror is too much terror. Any death is too much death. We recognize that, and we recognize the pressure that the Prime Minister is under. And we condemn terror. We condemn violence. We condemn death.

We also believe progress is being made. If you look at—yes, there's violence; yes, there's terror; but it's being isolated; it's beginning to—contained. Can the parties do more? Absolutely. And that's what the Secretary of State is going to do, is to urge Mr. Arafat to do more, to take better control of his security forces.

We're going to talk to the Prime Minister about his attitudes. We're friends, and I believe that what's important from this perspective is not to let the progress that's been made so far to break apart. We cannot let violence take hold.

And so that's why I've said I admire the Prime Minister's restraint and his patience. I understand the difficulties and the pressures. As he just said, 5 Israeli lives lost is equivalent of 250—5 is too many. But nevertheless, progress is being made. And it's essential that we continue the process and continue the progress that's being made. We're gaining by inches. I recognize progress is in inches, not in miles. But nevertheless, an inch is better than nothing.

And so therefore, this administration is committed to working with the parties. We urge people in the region——

Q. [*Inaudible*]—the decision——

President Bush. [*Inaudible*]—we urge people in the region to stop the violence. And that's first and foremost. You know, it's— either you're an optimist in life or not. And I'm optimistic that we can get—start the process of Mitchell at some point in time.

Q. But Mr. Prime Minister——

Prime Minister Sharon. I would like to answer to the Israeli Radio. Yesterday we had 16 terror attacks. And that included multi-fire; it included side bombs; it included shooting and sniping. We had 10 wounded. So all together, generally speaking, maybe there are less, but still terror is going on. And by now, though I would like very much to hear that Chairman Arafat instructed to re-arrest those terrorists which are planning and sending and mobilizing those suiciders, he has not done it yet. He has not instructed to arrest them, and they were not arrested. And beside that, he has not instructed yet to stop incitement. And that, of course, he could do—I would say he could have done it immediately because he controlled the—[*inaudible*]—completely.

Q. But will you negotiate under fire, Mr. Prime Minister? Will you negotiate under fire?

Prime Minister Sharon. I've said it very clearly: Israel will not negotiate under fire and under terror. We said it because if we do that, we'll never reach peace. That is the point. It's not—what I'm saying is not an obstacle, not a barrier against peace. On the contrary, if we will be very strict, then the Palestinians will understand they cannot gain anything by terror. Therefore, we have to be very strict in order to reach peace, which all of us would like to have.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:25 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. The President also referred to the Report of the Sharm el-Sheikh Fact-Finding Committee, chaired by former Senator George J. Mitchell, issued April 30. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Message to the Congress on the National Emergency With Respect to the Western Balkans
June 27, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to section 204(b) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(b) (IEEPA), and section 301 of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1631, I hereby report that I have exercised my statutory authority to declare a national emergency in response to the unusual and extraordinary threat posed to the national security and foreign policy of the United States by (i) actions of persons engaged in, or assisting, sponsoring, or supporting, extremist violence in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, southern Serbia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), and elsewhere in the Western Balkans region, and (ii) the actions of persons engaged in, or assisting, sponsoring, or supporting acts obstructing implementation of the Dayton Accords in Bosnia or United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 of June 10, 1999, in Kosovo. The actions of these individuals and groups threaten the peace in or diminish the security and stability of the Western Balkans, undermine the authority, efforts, and objectives of the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and other international organizations and entities present in those areas and the wider region, and endanger the safety of persons participating in or providing support to the activities of those organizations and entities, including United States military forces and Government officials. In order to deal with this threat, I have issued an Executive order blocking the property and interests in property of those persons determined to have undertaken the actions described above.

The Executive order prohibits United States persons from transferring, paying, exporting, withdrawing, or otherwise dealing in the property or interests in property of persons I have identified in the Annex to the order or persons designated pursuant to the order by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State. Included among the activities prohibited by the order are the making or receiving by United States persons of any contribution or provision of funds, goods, or services to or for the benefit of any person designated in or pursuant to the order. In the Executive order, I also have made a determination pursuant to section 203(b)(2) of IEEPA that the operation of the IEEPA exemption for certain humanitarian donations from the scope of the prohibitions would seriously impair my ability to deal with the national emergency. Absent such a determination, such donations of the type specified in section 203(b)(2) of IEEPA could strengthen the position of individuals and groups that endanger the safety of persons participating in or providing support to the United Nations, NATO, and other international organizations or entities, including U.S. military forces and Government officials, present in the region. The Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, is authorized to issue regulations in exercise of my authorities under IEEPA to implement the prohibitions set forth in the Executive order. All Federal agencies are also directed to take actions within their authority to carry out the provisions of the order, and, where appropriate, to advise the Secretary of the Treasury in a timely manner of the measures taken.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive order I have issued. The order was effective at 12:01 a.m. eastern daylight time on June 27, 2001.

I have issued the order in response to recent developments in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, southern Serbia, and elsewhere in the Western Balkans

region where persons have turned increasingly to the use of extremist violence, the incitement of ethnic conflict, and other obstructionist acts to promote irredentist or criminal agendas that have threatened the peace in and the stability and security of the region and placed those participating in or supporting international organizations, including U.S. military and Government personnel, at risk.

In both Macedonia and southern Serbia, individuals and groups have engaged in extremist violence and other acts of obstructionism to exploit legitimate grievances of local ethnic Albanians. These groups include local nationals who fought with the Kosovo Liberation Army in 1998–99 and have used their wartime connections to obtain funding and weapons from Kosovo and the ethnic Albanian diaspora. Guerrilla attacks by some of these groups against police and soldiers in Macedonia threaten to bring down the democratically elected, multi-ethnic government of a state that has become a close friend and invaluable partner of NATO. In March 2001, guerrillas operating on the border between Kosovo and Macedonia attempted to fire upon U.S. soldiers participating in the international security presence in Kosovo known as the Kosovo Force (KFOR). Guerrilla leaders subsequently made public threats against KFOR.

In southern Serbia, ethnic Albanian extremists have used the Ground Safety Zone (GSZ), originally intended as a buffer between KFOR and FRY/Government of Serbia (FRY/GoS) forces, as a safe haven for staging attacks against FRY/GoS police and soldiers. Members of ethnic Albanian armed extremist groups in southern Serbia have on several occasions fired on joint U.S.-Russian KFOR patrols in Kosovo. NATO has negotiated the return of FRY/GoS forces to the GSZ, and facilitated negotiations between Belgrade authorities and ethnic Albanian insurgents and political leaders from southern Serbia. A small number of the extremist leaders have since threatened to seek vengeance on KFOR, including U.S. KFOR.

Individuals and groups engaged in the activities described above have boasted falsely of having U.S. support, a claim that is believed by many in the region. They also have aggressively solicited funds from United States persons. These fund-raising efforts serve to fuel extremist violence and obstructionist activity in the region and are inimical to U.S. interests. Consequently, the Executive order I have issued is necessary to restrict any further financial or other support by United States persons for the persons designated in or pursuant to the order. The actions we are taking will demonstrate to all the peoples of the region and to the wider international community that the Government of the United States strongly opposes the recent extremist violence and obstructionist activity in Macedonia and southern Serbia and elsewhere in the Western Balkans. The concrete steps we are undertaking to block access by these groups and individuals to financial and material support will assist in restoring peace and stability in the Western Balkans region and help protect U.S. military forces and Government officials working towards that end.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
June 27, 2001.

NOTE: The Executive order and related proclamation of June 26 are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Republican Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters
June 27, 2001

Patients' Bill of Rights

The President. It's been my honor to welcome Members of the House of Representatives here to discuss a very important issue, which is Patients' Bill of Rights.

We had a good discussion about making sure that American workers and Americans have got good and decent health care. And there is such a bill that would provide American workers with the right kind of protections. And it's a bill that's been crafted in the House of Representatives, called the Fletcher-Peterson-Johnson bill. Two of the authors are here around the table. This piece of legislation, I am convinced, is—will make a big difference in people's lives. It will protect patients.

There are some other alternatives that are working their way—being debated on the House and the Senate that will run up the cost of health insurance for American workers and could conceivably cost millions of people their health insurance. I can't accept that kind of legislation.

I look forward to signing a bill such as the one that we've discussed here, a good piece of legislation that will make sense for the American workers. I'll be glad to answer some questions.

Sandra [Sandra Sobieraj, Associated Press].

Q. Sir, do you think the Democrats are playing politics here and angling for a veto, looking ahead to the 2002 elections?

The President. I don't. I think the Democrats are, hopefully, trying to come up with a good piece of legislation. I know the Republicans are. We had that kind of discussion. There seems to be a desire on the parts of people in Washington to get a good bill done. It's certainly my desire.

But I also think the American people will respect a President who stands on principle, and I've articulated the principles that I think are important for a piece of legislation. And the most important principle is that we don't have a piece of legislation that hurts the working people, that causes them not to have health care insurance, because health care insurance is more—will make it much more likely that the worker and their families are able to be treated well.

Now, I realize there are some complaints with HMOs. I signed legislation in Texas that dealt with those complaints. I look forward to signing legislation here that does just that, and the bill we discussed around this table is a piece of legislation that I will sign.

Situation in Macedonia

Q. Mr. President, you issued an order today on Macedonia. Do you think the ethnic Albanian rebels are getting a lot of financial support from the United States, and do you see any chance of committing U.S. troops to Macedonia to prevent a civil war?

The President. Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters], I take no option off the table in terms of the troops. We're a participant in NATO. I went to Europe recently and said, "We went into the Balkans together; we'll come out together," and I meant it.

Secondly, we've got some evidence that the ethnic Albanians, the extremists, are raising money not only in America but in Europe. And America will do our part to make sure that monies do not go to fund extremist activities that become a destabilizing influence for a democratically elected government in Macedonia.

Terry [Terry Moran, ABC News].

Patients' Bill of Rights

Q. Mr. President, on the question of where patients could go to hold HMOs accountable if they're wrongfully denied coverage: Democrats say that Federal court, your preferred venue, is too slow, too expensive, and frequently too far away from where people live. Why are you so adamant about keeping people out of their own State courts?

The President. Terry, I think if you look at this piece of legislation, you'll find there's a compromise between those who say it should only be in the Federal court and those who say it should only be in the State court. And the Fletcher bill has come up with an alternative procedure, one that will allow certain causes of action to be in the Federal court and other causes of action to be in a State court. And it's the right approach. It's a good compromise between two positions.

Q. But what's wrong with Federal court?

The President. Stretch [Richard Keil, Bloomberg Radio].

Bipartisanship/Stem Cell Research

Q. Mr. President, a two part question. Around the table here today you have all—only Republicans. Do you plan talks like this with the Democratic leaders in the House and the Senate, talks about Patients' Bill of Rights? And related to that, how close are you on a decision on stem cell research, and can you tell us which way you're leaning?

The President. I'll make a decision about that very emotional issue later on. In terms of whether I've talked to Democrats, of course I do. And there's a Democrat sponsor of this bill. He doesn't happen to be at the table, but he's on the right track, as far as I'm concerned, like the other sponsors of this bill.

Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:33 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. The Executive order and related proclamation of June 26, concerning persons who threaten international stabilization efforts in the Western Balkans, are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on Proposed Patients' Bill of Rights Legislation
June 27, 2001

The bipartisan proposal introduced today by Representatives Ernie Fletcher, Collin Peterson, Nancy Johnson, and Richard Burr, along with Speaker Hastert and the chairmen of the three committees with jurisdiction, Chairmen Boehner, Tauzin, and Thomas, makes progress in our effort to provide patients with a strong and enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights.

This proposal, like the legislation introduced by Senators Frist, Breaux, and Jeffords, is another example of a Patients' Bill of Rights that reflects the principles I laid out earlier this year. I am encouraged that the bill introduced today brings us significantly closer to enacting a good Patients' Bill of Rights.

This legislation provides strong patient protections to all Americans. It ensures that patients have the right to an independent medical review when they have been denied medical care, and it holds health plans accountable by providing patients with meaningful, effective remedies when they have been harmed by a denial or delay in receiving such care.

I am committed to providing patients with expanded remedies to hold their health plans accountable and believe we can do so while protecting workers and

their families from costly litigation that would increase health care premiums and leave too many Americans without health insurance. This legislation introduced today provides patients with meaningful remedies while preserving uniformity and certainty for employers who voluntarily offer health care benefits for millions of Americans across the country.

Remarks at the President's Dinner
June 27, 2001

Thank you all. Please be seated. Mr. Vice President, 11 months ago I made the smartest decision I could make when it came to politics. I picked you to become the Vice President. What a good man this guy is, and what a great job he's done for America.

I think you're the one over there with the light shining off your head. [*Laughter*] Oh yes, there you are. But I do know you're sitting next to a fabulous woman. Lynne Cheney is a great friend of Laura and mine, and we're real proud that she is a part of our team, as well.

Speaking about Laura, I can't tell you how proud I am of the job she's doing on behalf of the citizens of America. She is not only a fantastic mother and wife but a truly wonderful First Lady for America. We would like to stay for dinner, but we've got to go home and feed Barney the dog. [*Laughter*]

I'm really proud to be here at what used to be called the House-Senate Dinner. And I'm glad to have something to do with the name change. [*Laughter*] But this name—the dinner's name wouldn't have changed without the help of a lot of people in this room. And I want to thank you and the American people for giving me a chance to be the President of the greatest nation on the face of the Earth.

I want to thank Roger Enrico for his hard work. I want to thank Tommy Loeffler and George Allen and Jim McCrery, as well. I want to thank my friends, the Speaker of the House and soon-to-be majority leader of the Senate, Speaker Hastert and Trent Lott. It is such a pleasure to be able to work with two men to try to do what's right for America. And I want to thank you all for coming. Make no mistake about it, this dinner has one goal in mind, to make sure Denny Hastert remains the Speaker of the House and to make sure Trent Lott is the majority leader of the United States Senate. And we've got a reason why.

This just isn't politics. There's a reason why we need to make sure we remain strong in the Senate—and I want to thank the Senators who are here tonight—and the reason why we need to remain strong in the House—and I want to thank the House Members who are here tonight—and the reason why is because we have an agenda that is positive for America. We have a philosophy that is conservative and compassionate. Ours is a party that stands on principle, and ours is a party that's getting things done for the American people.

You know, there's a lot of talk in this town—people like to hold press conferences; people like to call people names. Well, what I like to do is to point out that when we work together, we can make some serious progress on behalf of the American people.

Take tax reform. Gosh, I remember in the campaign—Dick will tell you—when we used to talk about tax reform, and there would be a collective yawn by the people that made the news. Our opponents said it was a foolhardy effort. But as a result

of working together, and as a result of listening to the American people, I was able to sign in the White House, in record time, the first broad-based tax relief in a generation.

It would not have happened had the Speaker and the leader and Members of the Senate and House been willing to work together to do what's right for America. And what's right for America at this point in history is to trust the people with their own money. What was right for America is to understand these projected surpluses were not the Government's money; it was the people's money. And we've got to trust the people with their own money.

We worked together to put a plan out that was fair. Gosh, I remember all the old, tired talk in Washington about targeted tax relief. It meant that a handful of people got to decide who the winners and losers were in the Tax Code. We didn't think that was fair. We came with the simple principle that if we were going to have tax relief, everybody in America who paid taxes ought to get tax relief. And so the bill I signed reduced all taxes on every taxpayer in America.

We recognized the marriage penalty was unfair. After all, what kind of Tax Code is it that penalizes marriage? Ours is a party that stands for strong families in America. And so we did something about the marriage penalty, and we did away with the death tax in the Tax Code.

Ours was a plan based upon principles. The role of Government is not to create wealth; the role of Government is to create an environment in which the small business can grow or the entrepreneur can flourish. Tax relief sent a clear message that we understand the role of capital in our society, and we want to provide capital for small-business owners regardless of their background, regardless of where they're from, because the American Dream is really about owning something. And to the entrepreneurs all across the country, we say loud and clear: We understand what you're going through, and we want to stand side by side with you.

Tax relief was principled in that it said, we trust the people of America. We said loud and clear, when it came to budgeting, we would budget a fair amount of money for the Federal Government; we'd meet the basics, which we did. But with any money left over, we wanted the American people to have the right to spend their own money. You see, we trust the people of America. We'd rather the American people be making decisions for their families, as opposed to the Federal Government.

We also had a plan that was necessary at this point in our economic history. Oh, you're hearing all kinds of second-guessing now about the tax relief plan. But what you can't second-guess is that our economy has slowed down. And one of our jobs—the Vice President's and my job is to solve problems. And a way to handle an economic slowdown is through good, sound fiscal policy and by passing money back to people this summer through tax rebates. And by reducing the rates on everybody who pays taxes, we've sent a clear message to entrepreneurs and capital and workers all around the country: We're going to do something about the economic slowdown. Tax relief is important to provide second wind for the economic growth of the United States of America. I want to remind people it was conservative to cut taxes, but it was compassionate, as well.

I remember traveling our country endlessly, seeking the vote. And nearly every stop, there were people there that were tax families, hard-working Americans who were struggling to get ahead, people who were trying to cope with their high energy bills or trying to get out from underneath their credit card debt, moms and dads who were hoping for a bright future for their children. I can remember looking in the eyes of our fellow citizens at every stop and saying to myself, I can't wait to go to Washington and to work with Congress to pass money back, so these good folks

have got more of their hard-earned dollars to spend on their families.

Tax families made a huge impact on me as I campaigned across the country. I can't wait to get on the phone and see whether or not they like their tax rebate check when they start getting them this summer. I suspect they will.

And I remember traveling our country to hundreds of classrooms all across America, as well, and meeting dedicated teachers. And one of the things Laura is doing is, she's traveling the Nation recruiting youngsters and people who have just gotten out of the military to become a teacher. We need more teachers in America. We need to thank our teachers all across our land.

But we've also got to make sure we have an education system that's focused on results, an education system that holds up every child, an education system that believes every child can learn. And so we worked with the United States Congress to pass meaningful, real education reform. It's a reform package that says not only should we set high standards, but we ought to trust local people to chart the path for excellence for every single child. It's an education plan that focuses on each individual by insisting that school districts and States measure, so that we know. The old way used to say, "How old are you? And if you're 10, we'll put you in the fourth grade, and if you're 12, we'll move you here, and if you're 14, gosh, you're supposed to be here." But once we get this bill out of the Senate and the House conference committees and on my desk, America will start to ask the question, "What do you know?" And if you don't know what you're supposed to know, we'll make sure you do, early, before it's too late. There are no second-rate children in America, as far as we're concerned, and there are no second-rate dreams.

Mine is a job that will leave us with vivid memories and great experiences. There's no more vivid a memory than I had when the EP–3 crew came to the White House. They were all dressed in their sparkling whites. They were proud to be Americans, and I was proud to welcome them to the most sacred office in our land. I was really proud to be able to tell the pilot what a fantastic job he did of taking a damaged aircraft and saving the lives of his crewmembers.

Whether it be greeting the EP–3 crew or inspecting the troops as Commander in Chief, I'm reminded of what one of my principal jobs is, and to make sure the world is a more peaceful place. And we believe it starts with having a military that's properly paid, properly housed, and properly trained; prepared to fight and win war and, therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place.

Today I submitted up to Congress an amendment to the 2002 budget, which will increase military spending by 32.6 billion over the 2001 budget. It is my administration's commitment to a strong national defense. And at the same time, I'm proud of my Secretary of Defense's review of our military, to make sure that we're focused and make sure that taxpayers' dollars go into weapons systems that will be needed to keep the peace as we head into the 21st century.

I had the honor of representing our Nation recently in Europe, where I had a chance to explain what it meant to develop new weapons systems to keep the peace. Perhaps the most meaningful discussion I had was in a beautiful country called Slovenia. You ought to go there sometime. It is picturesque. I told the President I'd put a plug in for him. [*Laughter*] It is unbelievably beautiful country. And there I had the honor of meeting President Putin of Russia.

It was a fascinating discussion. I explained to him that ours was a peaceful nation. We didn't view Russia as an enemy. Mine is an administration that wants to discard the old way of thinking that took place during the cold war. In the old days, peace

was achieved by figuring out how many weapons we could point at each other. But I explained to President Putin, Russia is no longer the threat. The threat to Russia or the threat to the United States or the threat to freedom-loving people will come as a result of a leader of a rogue nation having weapons of mass destruction. And therefore, to keep the peace, we must think differently.

I explained to him that history, past history was no longer relevant to the future, that two young leaders should seize the moment and make the world more peaceful by discarding that part of the ABM Treaty that prevents the United States from doing the research and development necessary to deploy effective antiballistic missile systems to keep the peace.

And it's been my honor to travel our country and to see the great acts of compassion that take place every single day, without one Government law telling people what to do. I remember going to Tampa, Florida, for a Habitat for Humanity building site. I had the privilege of raising the wall. For those of you who have built a Habitat For Humanity home, you know the great pride you have when you nail a bunch a nails and not hit your finger—[*laughter*]—and then stand side by side with good, decent citizens, including the homeowner, to raise the wall. It was such a meaningful moment, because it reminded me about the great strength of America. And the great strength of America is America's people.

Ours is a compassionate land, a decent land, a land where people are motivated by good will, good heart, and strong faith. And so one of the most important initiatives that we're are discussing in the Halls of the United States Congress is an initiative which will gather the true strength of America, a Faith-Based Initiative that says there are people in America who suffer. They suffer from want and need; they suffer from love and compassion. It makes sense for our country to welcome community and faith-based groups into the compassionate delivery of care and help if we want the American Dream to extend its reach throughout every neighborhood in America.

One of my favorite stories is an old story about a grandfather and his grandson walking along a beach that was chock-full of starfish. And the young boy picked one of them up and threw it in the ocean. And the grandfather, looking down the beach, seeing all the starfish, said, "That's not going to make any difference." And the young boy looked at his grandfather and said, "It makes a difference to that one." And that's how you change America—one heart, one soul, one conscience at a time.

And we can also change America, for those of us fortunate enough to hold positions of responsibility, by setting good examples, by working hard to usher in a period of personal responsibility. We must reject the old cultures which said, "If it feels good, just go ahead and do it; and if you've got a problem, blame somebody else." Ours is a group of citizens caring about America who want to work together to usher in a period of personal responsibility, a period where the moms and dads of America understand our most important job will be to love our children with all our hearts and all our souls, a period when each of us must turn to a neighbor in need and say, "What can we do to help?"—a period of time when those of us who have been elected to office understand the high responsibilities of the offices to which we have been elected.

I welcome a cultural shift in America. I'm going to work hard to call all those who care about our Nation to join me in changing the culture and join me in ushering in a period of personal responsibility. And I want you to know that assuming the responsibility of President is a high honor, an honor I hold dearly, an honor I hold sacred, and an honor I will not abrogate to the American people.

Thank you for coming tonight, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:30 p.m. at the Washington Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Roger A. Enrico, vice chairman of the board, PepsiCo, Inc.; Tom Loeffler, vice chairman of regents, University of Texas at San Antonio; U.S. Navy pilot Lt. Shane Osborn, USN; President Milan Kucan of Slovenia; and President Vladimir Putin of Russia.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report of the Federal Labor Relations Authority
June 27, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with section 701 of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 (Public Law 95–454; 5 U.S.C. 7104(e)), I transmit herewith to you the Twenty-second Annual Report of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for Fiscal Year 2000.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,

June 27, 2001.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 28.

Remarks to Department of Energy Employees
June 28, 2001

Thank you very much. Okay. Conserve your energy. [*Laughter*] That's the message I'm sending to Congress today, in a comprehensive energy strategy. On the one hand, it says we must be wiser about how we develop and increase supply, and on the other hand, it says we must be wiser about how we conserve energy.

Our Nation must have a strategy, a broad, comprehensive energy strategy that calls upon the best of the Nation's entrepreneurs to help us develop the technologies necessary to make wise choices in the marketplace, as well as calls upon our Nation's innovative technologies to help us find new sources of energy. And the plan I submitted to Congress today does just that.

Mr. Secretary, I appreciate your leadership. He's a man of high energy and good wisdom. And I picked the right man to lead the Energy Department for the country. I want to thank all the hard-working folks here at the Department of Energy and those around the country who are dedicating your lives to making America a better place.

I want to thank the United States Congressman who came. George, thank you very much for being here. He's from the great State of California. As you know, California has an energy issue, and the people of our country and the people of California must understand that the Federal Government has stood side by side with the people of California, working to alleviate the situation there.

We've expedited the ability for California to build new powerplants. We've reduced

the regulatory burdens and hurdles to encourage the increase of supply into a State in which no powerplant had been built for over a decade. And yesterday I was pleased to see—and the Governor inaugurated a new powerplant in Chino, California—the beginnings of what is a rational energy policy that will help the good people of California get out from underneath 10 years of neglect.

Secondly, the Federal Government made a strong commitment, led by Spence Abraham and led by Don Rumsfeld, to reduce the amount of usage of energy in the State of California. And I'm pleased to report the U.S. Navy, for example, has reported it has reduced power during peak hours by 11 percent over last year. And I want to thank you all for being good stewards of the Nation's scarce resources.

I'm also pleased to recognize the members of the Canadian-Mexican-U.S. task force to develop energy supply in our own hemisphere. Natural gas needs to move in our hemisphere. It needs to move easily across our borders to find markets, to be able to ease the pressures of reduced supply all around the country.

One of the interesting things about California is the new powerplants that are now being constructed will be powered by natural gas. Therefore, we need more natural gas supply to power the powerplants. And I want to thank our Mexican and Canadian friends for working with us to jointly develop—[*applause*].

And finally, I want to thank the entrepreneurs who have come to brief Spence and myself on the latest technologies that are developing. You know, one of the great things about our country is that if we provide the right incentive and the right partnerships, there are no limits to what our entrepreneurs can develop; there's no limits to the technology that we can bring to marketplace.

And we saw a lot of that today. We saw new automobiles that will be more fuel efficient, while making sure that consumer demand for comfort is met. We saw new technologies being developed out of Silicon Valley and Massachusetts and other States, that will make consumer products more energy efficient. And I want to thank the entrepreneurs who are here and remind you that my government is committed to this proposition. Our job is to create an environment in which the entrepreneurial spirit flourishes all across America. That not only means reasonable, sound tax policy; that means putting the Federal Government squarely on the side of innovation.

And so, today I'm pleased to announce $85.7 million in Federal grants to encourage academia and the private sector to join with contributions from the private sector to accelerate the development of fuel cells, advanced engines, hydrotechnology, and efficient appliances for American consumers.

And today, as well, I want to talk about what's called vampires and announce to the Nation the new vampire slayer, and that's the Secretary of Energy, Spence Abraham. [*Laughter*] Because of our desire for instant convenience, many of the appliances in our homes carry unnecessarily high energy costs. Because we're used to a computer coming on instantly or a TV snapping on as a result of a flick of a remote switch, common-day appliances eat enormous amounts of energy, and yet we're developing the technologies necessary to have both convenience and energy savings.

Today we witnessed the technology necessary, for example, to take a device that powers cell phones and reduce the amount of electricity by a significant amount of money. You see, when the battery is plugged into the wall, even though the phone is not charging, it still eats energy. And while that may not be much of a savings on an individual unit basis, when you multiply the amount of chargers plugged into people's walls all across America, one can begin to realize significant energy savings all across the country.

As a matter of fact, it said that these vampires, the vampire devices use about

4 percent of the electricity in the average home. And to put this on a national scale, if we multiplied the vampire devices' energy consumption across the country, we're talking about 52 billion kilowatt hours of power a year, or the equivalent of 26 average-size powerplants.

And so the fundamental question is, are we able to mate the technologies with the consumer devices? And the answer is, we must. We must, if we are to have an energy strategy of which one of the key components is conservation. And so today, not only am I announcing that Spence is the vampire slayer—and by that, I mean that the Federal Government will work hard to purchase and promote those energy savers that only use 1 watt of energy as opposed to the average 4 or 7 watts of energy.

And so, what can we do? What can we do to set the clear example? Well, first, I'm going to sign an Executive order directing all Federal agencies to purchase appliances that meet the 1-watt standard, wherever cost effective. I say wherever cost effective because I don't want the manufacturers of the new products to feel that they've got an easy market when it comes to the Federal Government. We will purchase the new technologies, but we will make sure we do so without getting gouged. We'll be reasonable purchasers. But the Federal Government must set the example.

We must have—my dream is to have desktop computers all across our Government with the latest savings devices that we saw today on display. Saving devices that say, when the computer is off or on standby, the energy supply being used is reduced by sevenfold. That's necessary. It is the right step for our Federal Government to set the example. It is the right step for our Federal Government—on the one hand, if we lay out an energy strategy, we must act upon the strategy.

And so, Mr. Secretary, when I sign that Executive order, I know the kind of person you are. You will join with me in judging how effective our purchasers have become, to whether or not this is simply a piece of paper or whether or not it becomes an action plan for smart Government policy. And both of us are joined together to make sure it's an action plan.

Secondly, we hope industry joins with Government in making these wise decisions. That's happening. The bottom line is essential for many corporations. The bottom line can be drastically affected in a positive way by smart energy practices, and it's happening. Imagine the economies of purchase that will take place when the Federal Government and industry starts making wise decisions about the technologies to save energy, so that it becomes much more feasible for the American consumer in short order.

And finally, we must incorporate the new 1-watt standard in the qualifications to earn the ENERGY STAR as awarded by the Department of Energy and the EPA. The ENERGY STAR is an important marketing tool, because it says to energy-conscious consumers: This product makes sense; this product incorporates the latest technology to conserve energy; this product is the most efficient use of technology that we can promote.

And we're very aggressive about promoting ENERGY STAR. I'm a strong supporter of the program, because there are millions of Americans who want to make the right choices, who want to help this Nation become less dependent on foreign sources of crude oil, who want this Nation to be a nation that has a reliable energy source, and who want to do their part when it comes to purchasing in the marketplace. And ENERGY STAR is a great way for the Federal Government to enter into a partnership with consumer product producers that says: This is the latest; this is the best. And so the Secretary of Energy and the Director of—Administrator of the EPA and my office will work to promote ENERGY STAR all across the country.

Ours is the first administration that has laid out a broad strategy, a comprehensive strategy, a strategy that goes beyond the stale debates of whether or not we ought to drill for natural gas in Alaska, or not. This strategy is much broader than that. And while I strongly believe we ought to explore for natural gas and hydrocarbons without destroying our environment—and I believe we can do so in Alaska—it's important for the American people to understand that we're talking way beyond just one single issue that seems to dominate the landscape here in Washington, DC.

Ours is a program that says: We must conserve; we must advance technologies that are smart and reasonable and make eminent sense for the future of our country; and that while we're promoting additional supply, we must be wise about how we get supplies to the consumers. We must modernize an aging, decrepit, old, energy-inefficient infrastructure. It's about time an administration came up and told the truth to the American people and laid out a commonsense agenda to make sure the great future of this country is as bright as it possibly can be.

Mr. Secretary, I'm honored to be here. Thank you for the invitation. Again, I want to repeat to all the good, hard-working folks here in this Department: Thanks for your service to the greatest country on the face of the Earth.

God bless you all, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:15 a.m. in the cafeteria at the Department of Energy. In his remarks, he referred to Representative George Radanovich and Gov. Gray Davis of California. The Executive order of July 31 on energy efficient standby power devices was published in the *Federal Register* at 66 FR 40571.

Message to the Congress Transmitting National Energy Policy Legislative Initiatives
June 28, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

One of the first actions I took when I became President in January was to create the National Energy Policy Development Group to examine America's energy needs and to develop a policy to put our Nation's energy future on sound footing.

I am hereby transmitting to the Congress proposals contained in the National Energy Policy report that require legislative action. In conjunction with executive actions that my Administration is already undertaking, these legislative initiatives will help address the underlying causes of the energy challenges that Americans face now and in the years to come. Energy has enormous implications for our economy, our environment, and our national security. We cannot let another year go by without addressing these issues together in a comprehensive and balanced package.

These important legislative initiatives, combined with regulatory and administrative actions, comprise a comprehensive and forward-looking plan that utilizes 21st century technology to allow us to promote conservation and diversify our energy supply. These actions will increase the quality of life of Americans by providing reliable energy and protecting the environment.

Our policy will modernize and increase conservation by ensuring that energy is used as efficiently as possible. In addition, the National Energy Policy will modernize

and expand our energy infrastructure, creating a new high-tech energy delivery network that increases the reliability of our energy supply. Further, it will diversify our energy supply by encouraging renewable and alternative sources of energy as well as the latest technologies to increase environmentally friendly exploration and production of domestic energy resources.

Importantly, our energy policy improves and accelerates environmental protection. By utilizing the latest in pollution control technologies to cut harmful emissions we can integrate our desire for a cleaner environment and a sufficient supply of energy for the future. We will also strengthen America's energy security. We will do so by reducing our dependence on foreign sources of oil, and by protecting low-income Americans from soaring energy prices and supply shortages through programs like the Low Income Housing Energy Assistance Program.

My Administration stands ready to work with the Congress to enact comprehensive energy legislation this year.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
June 28, 2001.

Statement on the Transfer of Slobodan Milosevic to the War Crimes Tribunal
June 28, 2001

I applaud today's transfer of indicted war criminal Slobodan Milosevic to the War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague. This very important step by the leaders in Belgrade ensures that Milosevic can finally be tried for his war crimes and crimes against humanity. During various visits by Yugoslav authorities to Washington, they pledged that Yugoslavia was committed to cooperating with the Tribunal. Milosevic's transfer is a strong sign of that commitment. We are confident that the Government of Yugoslavia will continue down the path of cooperation with the Tribunal.

The transfer of Milosevic to The Hague is an unequivocal message to those persons who brought such tragedy and brutality to the Balkans, that they will be held accountable for their crimes. Milosevic's transfer further signals the commitment of the new leadership in Belgrade to turn Yugoslavia away from its tragic past and toward a brighter future as a full member of the community of European democracies.

The United States stands ready to assist the people of Yugoslavia as they continue to take the difficult steps to advance its democratic and economic reform.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Community Solutions Legislation
June 28, 2001

I commend the House Judiciary Committee for passing legislation that offers hope to tens of millions of people at risk, including 15 million children. I believe strongly that Government should support programs that work to save and change lives of those in need.

I look forward to action by the Ways and Means Committee and urge the House to pass this legislation as soon possible.

NOTE: The proposed "Community Solutions Act of 2001" is H.R. 7.

Joint Statement by Presidents George W. Bush, John Agyekum Kufuor, Abdoulaye Wade, and Alpha Oumar Konare
June 28, 2001

This meeting affirms the high regard in which United States holds these strong African democracies. Our relationship is based on shared democratic values.

President Bush joins Presidents Kufuor of Ghana, Wade of Senegal, and Konare of Mali in affirming our shared opposition to governments that come to power or seek to retain power by unconstitutional means. The United States opposes any action that undermines legitimate, democratic rule, including coups and other direct power grabs, as well as constitutional changes orchestrated solely to promote an incumbent's hold on power or to impede an opponent.

The leaders agreed to continue our mutual efforts to promote regional peace and prosperity. The United States welcomes and appreciates the participation of Ghana, Senegal, and Mali in initiatives to further regional security, such as the African Crisis Response Initiative and Operation Focus Relief.

Stability and peace are ends in themselves, but they are also essential prerequisites for economic prosperity, development, and poverty alleviation. The United States welcomes the region's efforts to promote stability, as the precursors to investment and economic growth, but also ongoing efforts to break down barriers to regional trade and investment. President Bush also welcomes African development initiatives, such as the Millennium Africa Recovery and OMEGA plans. An integrated West Africa would be best positioned to take advantage of the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

The leaders expressed a joint commitment to remain engaged in efforts to promote peace, stability, and democracy in West Africa, and President Bush reaffirmed that the United State will work with the region to build mechanisms to prevent and, when necessary, contain and end conflict.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting
June 28, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967, as amended (47 U.S.C. 396(i)), I transmit herewith the Annual Report of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for Fiscal Year 2000.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,
June 28, 2001.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction
June 28, 2001

To the Congress of the United States:

Enclosed is a report to the Congress on Executive Order 12938, as required by section 204 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1703(c)) and section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1641(c)).

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,

June 28, 2001.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 29.

Remarks at a Black Music Month Celebration
June 29, 2001

Please be seated. Well, thank you all very much, and welcome to the White House, the people's house. It is my honor today to sign a proclamation celebrating Black Music Month and also to welcome some of the finest entertainers in America to the people's room, people who brought a lot of joy and heart and energy to the American scene, folks who have enriched our country's culture. And so, Laura and I welcome you here and thank you for coming.

I also want to thank Debbie Allen, our emcee, who will be making sure that—[*applause*]—and the Members of Congress who are here. I want to thank our entertainers who are going to entertain today who are here. I want to thank some of the entertainers who entertained me who are here, James Brown, the Four Tops. We're honoring all-stars today. I want to welcome the student honorees, Danielle Weatherford, Regina De Ocampo, and Lauren Dawson, who are here on the stage with me. I want to thank you all for being here. I want to thank Kenneth Gamble and Leon Huff. I want to welcome representatives of the industry, producers and directors who are here, as well. Thank you all for coming.

This is an appropriate place to host an event, right here in the East Room, because so many of the world's great artists have preceded us. And we're also welcoming the talent of a new generation, who I just introduced.

Let me talk about some of the music legends who are here on the stage. First, I'm so thankful that Shirley Caesar and Bobby Jones are here. Their voices are a part of a ministry that has had a profound effect on people's lives. It is fitting we honor gospel music in the White House and in our country.

Lena Horne and Nancy Wilson are honorees, and they are unable to join us today. But they sang some sweet music for the American people.

And finally, Lionel Hampton is here, and it's such an honor. Laura and I are honored to welcome him to Washington, just like

Harry and Bess Truman did when he played at their inaugural ball in 1949. The Johnsons, the Nixons, and the Reagans all invited Lionel here, as well. Presidents come and go, but there's only one "Vibes President" of the United States. [*Laughter*]

Lionel Hampton is an old friend of our family's, going all the way back to my dad's boyhood. On a couple of occasions, he and my grandfather did a few numbers together. My grandfather was quite a singer, as Lionel would tell you. And as Laura would tell you, the gene pool didn't spread this far. [*Laughter*]

A lot of other greats have passed through the White House, including America's Ambassador of Good Will, Louis Armstrong. In this room, Pearl Bailey was introduced to Mikhail Gorbachev by Ronald Reagan, who said simply, "This is our Pearl." [*Laughter*] Eubie Blake played ragtime piano on the South Lawn. And these chandeliers, I can assure you, trembled when Ella Fitzgerald sang here. It was here that Duke Ellington received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, which was a fitting tribute to the son of a White House butler.

Today we pay homage to an American tradition, a tradition that only America could have produced. Spirituals, jazz, R&B, hip-hop are performed, heard, and loved in every part of the world—every part of the world. But they belong to our country in a unique way. And as the President of this country, I'm proud to herald that uniqueness today.

If you trace the roots of Black American music, you arrive at the same place—with a people held in bondage, denied schooling, and kept away from opportunity. Yet, out of all that suffering came the early spirituals, some of the sweetest praise ever lifted up to heaven. In those songs, humanity will always hear the voice of hope in the face of injustice.

Since those early days, the music of Black Americans has told many other stories, in many other styles: Scott Joplin to Jelly Roll Morton, from Marian Anderson to Aretha Franklin, from Nat King Cole to the Neville Brothers, from Dizzy Gillespie to Sam Cooke, Kathleen Battle to Gladys Knight, from James Brown to the Four Tops. It is music that is always easy to enjoy, yet impossible to imitate.

A story is told about Louis Armstrong—someone came up to the legendary giant one day and asked him to define jazz. They wanted to understand it, so they came to the master himself, and he replied, "Man, if you've got to ask, you'll never know." [*Laughter*]

Well, there's some things I know today. I know America is a richer place for the musicians and the music that we honor today. Again, I welcome you to the White House. And it's now my honor to sign the Executive proclamation.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:20 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Kenneth Gamble and Leon Huff, founders, Philadelphia International Records. The proclamation of June 29 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on Senate Action on Patients' Bill of Rights Legislation
June 29, 2001

I am pleased that the Patients' Bill of Rights adopted in the Senate today more closely reflects my principles than did the original McCain-Kennedy-Edwards bill. I appreciate the good faith efforts of those who worked to improve the bill by narrowing some loopholes and giving greater deference to state patient protections.

The Senate failed, however, to address the danger that excessive, unlimited litigation in State courts would drive up premium costs and cause many American families to lose their health insurance. I could not in good conscience sign this bill because it puts the interests of trial lawyers before the interest of patients.

I will continue to work with the House to pass a strong Patients' Bill of Rights, like Fletcher-Peterson-Johnson, that provides patients with strong protections, holds HMOs accountable, but discourages runaway litigation costs. I urge the House to pass a meaningful and effective Patients' Bill of Rights that meets my principles.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Extending Generalized System of Preferences Benefits to the Republic of Georgia
June 29, 2001

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Pursuant to section 502(f) of the Trade Act of l974, as amended (the "Act"), I am writing to notify you of my intent to add the Republic of Georgia to the list of beneficiary developing countries under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). The GSP program offers duty-free access to the U.S. market for a wide range of products from beneficiary developing countries.

I have considered the criteria set forth in sections 501 and 502 of the Act and have determined that it is appropriate to extend GSP benefits to Georgia.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate. The related proclamation of June 29 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting an Account of Federal Expenditures for Climate Change Programs and Activities
June 29, 2001

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In accordance with section 566(b) of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2001 (Public Law 106–429), I transmit herewith an account of Federal expenditures for climate change programs and activities. This report includes both domestic and international programs and activities related to climate change, and contains data on both spending and performance goals.

Sincerely,

GEORGE W. BUSH

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate.

The President's Radio Address
June 30, 2001

Good morning. It's the Fourth of July this coming week, a proud day for all Americans. Two hundred and twenty-five years ago, the Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence. That document's bold words defined our Nation and inspired the world, but words alone did not secure America's independence. In 1776 liberty had to be defended by brave soldiers and sailors at the risk of their lives, and liberty is still defended by brave men and women today.

Much has changed over the past two centuries for the people who wear the uniform of the United States. Our Armed Forces have grown into the mightiest on Earth, and their responsibilities extend all over the world. Yet, the courage and patriotism of our service men and women are as sure and as strong as ever, and we owe them the same appreciation that we feel for the soldiers of Bunker Hill, Valley Forge, and Yorktown. We owe them fair salaries, first-class health benefits, and decent housing. And what we owe, we will pay.

This past week I announced an amended budget request for the Department of Defense in 2002—32.6 billion more than in 2001—to improve the training, readiness, and quality of life of our troops. This is the biggest defense increase since the Reagan buildup of the mid-1980s. For too many years, our strength has dwindled. Now we are rebuilding once again, and our first priority is the well-being of men and women in uniform. Two-thirds of our military family housing units are listed by the Department of Defense as being in poor condition. This will change.

We have other defense priorities, as well. Secretary Rumsfeld is completing a review of the mission and structure of our Armed Forces. Soon we'll be proposing a new defense strategy for a new age, a strategy that recognizes the cold war is over, but that threats to our security still remain. We are consulting with our allies, with Russia, and with others on a defense system that will protect our country, our forces, and our friends from missile attack and nuclear blackmail.

It's time for fresh thinking and rapid change in our national defense, to prepare for challenges that are changing just as quickly. One thing will never change, the quality and dedication of the men and women who wear America's uniform. They give their best; they are the best; and they deserve the best. There is no greater honor for a President than to serve as Commander in Chief, and my budget priorities reflect the pride I feel in the outstanding people who serve and protect us all.

I urge the Congress to promptly approve my defense requests, which will assure better pay, better housing, and better health care for our Armed Forces. And I wish you and your family a happy and safe Fourth of July.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 1:04 p.m. on June 29 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on June 30. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 29 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan and an Exchange With Reporters at Camp David, Maryland *June 30, 2001*

President Bush. It is my honor to welcome the Prime Minister of a—of our close friend and ally. We had a 2-hour meeting, a very frank and open discussion. There's no question we will work together. There's no question in my mind our relationship will never be stronger than under our leadership.

We talked about security matters. We talked about economics, and I want to praise the Prime Minister for his vision for reform for the Japanese economy. He's willing to make difficult choices, and that's what a leader does.

We talked about the environment. We talked about baseball. And we talked about the need to make sure that we work for a more peaceful world. And I'm confident we'll be able to do so.

So, Mr. Prime Minister, welcome.

Prime Minister Koizumi. It was a wonderful meeting, and I believe we were able to establish a relationship of trust. It was a heart-to-heart meeting. This was truly a wonderful meeting. I did not feel—or I did not, at the outset, believe that I would be able to establish such a strong relationship of trust with the President in my first meeting. This was much more than I had expected.

In the Genoa summit, upcoming summit, and during the President's visit to Tokyo this fall, I am certain that we will be able to have an even closer relationship during our meetings.

President Bush. We'll answer a few questions.

Mr. Prime Minister.

Q. I have a question for both of you, if you don't mind. First——

President Bush. It's typical, by the way. He's given one question, and of course, he asks two.

Japan's Economy/Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change

Q. I thought it was one each. [*Laughter*]

Sir, Mr. President, the Prime Minister acknowledges that his reforms will slow the economic growth in Japan, at least in the short term. Wouldn't that threaten to drag down our economy, as well?

And to you, Mr. Prime Minister, do you still think that President Bush's position on the Kyoto treaty is disappointing? And if so, why hasn't your country ratified it, or at least pledged to do so, without the United States?

President Bush. Let me first answer. First of all, the Prime Minister recognizes that there needs to be deep and meaningful reform. I talked to him about our experiences in Texas in the eighties, where we acted—or the marketplace acted, we acted to remedy a situation in which we had bad loans, nonperforming assets, and there was some pain. But as a result of making the very difficult decisions, our economy was restructured and came back stronger than before.

I support the Prime Minister—strongly support the Prime Minister's reform agenda for the economy. He reminded me that in the course of winning his election, he had to appeal to the people of Japan and made a very strong, direct appeal in laying out this aggressive agenda. And we support him strongly.

I believe, Ron [Ron Fournier, Associated Press], it's in our Nation's best interests that the Japanese economy flourish, that it's strong and vibrant. And we had a very meaningful discussion, ranging from economic restructuring and reform to trade, the new global round of WTO, as well. And I believe he's the leader that Japan needs for this moment in her history.

He wants you to talk about Kyoto.

Prime Minister Koizumi. I am not disappointed at the President's position. The President is enthusiastic about environmental issues, and there is still time to discuss this issue.

I believe if the United States and Japan were to cooperate in dealing with environmental issues, we will be able to create means which will be more effective in dealing with the global warming issue and also in reducing our gas emissions. And I believe that in doing so, we will further be able to cooperate with the rest of the world.

Presently, I do not have the intention of proceeding without the cooperation of the United States. To the very last moment, I will work with the United States in cooperating on environmental issues. There's still time left to discuss ways to cooperate with each other.

President's Discussions With Prime Minister

[*At this point, a question was asked in Japanese, and a translation was not provided.*]

Prime Minister Koizumi. No, we did not exchange nicknames, like Ron—[*inaudible*]—in the eighties. [*Laughter*] But we still had a meeting in which we were able to have a truly frank exchange of views in a friendly manner. It was very warm, and it was a very truly enjoyable, meaningful meeting.

Only people who are called *hen-jins* are able to proceed with reforms or making changes. But when I say *hen-jin,* this is not strange or eccentric, but this means extraordinary. [*Laughter*]

Vice President Dick Cheney

Q. Mr. President, are you concerned about the Vice President's health, and do you think perhaps he should slow down?

President Bush. Mr. Prime Minister, my great friend and the Vice President of our country went to the hospital today and put a pacemaker on his heart. It's a procedure that is viewed as something not out of the ordinary for the people who have had a heart condition. I'm told the operation went well. I'm going to speak to him in about an hour. I look forward to hearing his strong and steady voice on the phone.

No, I don't think he ought to slow down. I think he ought to listen to his body. I think he ought to—which he has been doing. I think he ought to work at a pace that he is comfortable with. And I know Dick Cheney well, and if I were to say, "You've got to slow down, Mr. Vice President," he's going to say, "Forget it," because he's got a job to do. And he's a valuable member of my administration. He and his doctors made the right decision. And I'm told that he's going to be back to work Monday morning, and I look forward to seeing him in the Oval Office Monday morning. But I'm going to speak to him directly.

Q. They did put it in?

President Bush. They did put it in.

Japan's Economy/President's Discussions With Prime Minister

Q. Mr. President, after the meeting with the Prime Minister for almost 2 hours now, did you find out why he's so popular in Japan? Did you wholeheartedly support his economic reform plans, which could result in very slow growth in Japan for as long as 3 years? Didn't you have any reservations at all about his plans, namely, implications for the global economy and for the U.S. economy?

President Bush. I have no reservations about the economic reform agenda that the Prime Minister is advancing. He talks about tackling some difficult issues that some leaders in the past refused to address.

I came—I knew the Prime Minister was dynamic; I've heard that; I've read it. But you don't really realize how dynamic he is until you have a chance to witness his conversation. He's got a great sense of humor. He loves to laugh, but he's a courageous leader, as well. And I admire a person who recognizes that his duty is not

to avoid but to lead. His duty is to speak plainly to the people of his country. And I believe strongly that we will have a good relationship, not only to foster what's in the best interests of our country—countries—and in the region, but we'll have a good personal relationship, as well. After all, he's the only world leader I've ever played catch with, with a baseball.

Listen, thank you all for coming.

Prime Minister Koizumi. In meeting with President Bush, I instantly felt that with this person I will be able to give my frank views, and I will be able to speak from the bottom of my heart. He has that kind of an atmosphere within himself. And with our common, shared values between Japan and the United States, I am certain that I will continue to be able to have these frank exchange of views with him.

President Bush. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:09 a.m. outside the Holly Cabin. Prime Minister Koizumi spoke in Japanese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi: Partnership for Security and Prosperity
June 30, 2001

President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi met today at Camp David to reaffirm the partnership between the United States and Japan based on shared values, mutual trust, and friendship.

Cooperation for Peace and Stability

Welcoming the fiftieth anniversary of the U.S.-Japan security relationship, the President and Prime Minister reaffirmed that the U.S.-Japan alliance is the cornerstone of peace and stability in the Asia Pacific region. The two leaders agreed on the importance of strengthening strategic dialogue, and decided to intensify consultations on the Asia Pacific region and other areas of the world. The President and Prime Minister emphasized the importance of encouraging China's constructive role in the international community and early accession to the WTO, working with the Republic of Korea to achieve peace on the Korean peninsula, furthering non-proliferation efforts around the globe, and promoting United Nations Security Council reform and obtaining for Japan a permanent seat on the Security Council.

The President and Prime Minister decided to intensify consultations at various levels on further steps in security cooperation, building on continuing implementation of the Defense Guidelines. The two leaders noted that these consultations will focus on an assessment of the regional security environment, and areas such as force structure and force posture, security strategies, bilateral roles and missions during contingencies, and cooperation in peacekeeping. The two leaders reaffirmed that forward U.S. presence is critical to regional stability, and the President thanked the Prime Minister for Japan's host-nation support. They agreed on the importance of working on issues related to U.S. forces in Japan, such as the steady implementation of the SACO process to reduce the burden on the people of Okinawa, and thereby strengthen the U.S.-Japan alliance. Recognizing the growing threat from the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, the two leaders emphasized the need for a comprehensive strategy to address this threat, including a variety of defense systems and diplomatic initiatives, such as arms reductions. The President and the

Prime Minister agreed that the two governments should continue to consult closely on missile defense, together with strengthened non-proliferation and counter-proliferation measures. The Prime Minister reiterated Japan's understanding regarding the President's call for exploring a new approach to transforming deterrence. The President and Prime Minister also reiterated the importance of cooperative research on ballistic missile defense technologies.

Economic Partnership for Growth

The President and Prime Minister affirmed their belief that open markets and sound macroeconomic and regulatory policy are vital for sustained prosperity. The Prime Minister expressed his determination to vigorously and comprehensively implement structural and regulatory reform to revitalize the Japanese economy, including through effectively addressing corporate debt and non-performing loans. The President expressed his appreciation for the Prime Minister's plan, "Structural Reform in the Japanese Economy: Basic Policies for Macroeconomic Management." The Prime Minister welcomed the President's strong intention to support sustained economic growth in the United States through tax cuts and other measures. They noted with satisfaction the completion of the Fourth Joint Status Report on Deregulation and Competition Policy, and called for increased collaborative efforts to improve their nations' climates for foreign direct investment.

The two leaders announced the launch of a new bilateral economic initiative called the U.S.-Japan Economic Partnership for Growth (detailed in Annex). This initiative establishes a structure for cooperation and engagement on bilateral, regional and global economic and trade issues. Both governments also will engage in cooperative efforts to address other key issues.

President Bush and Prime Minister Koizumi reaffirmed their determination to stay personally engaged in the effort to launch a new WTO round later this year in Qatar, to further liberalize world trade and to clarify, strengthen and extend WTO rules, so as to promote economic growth and equip the trading system to meet the challenges of globalization.

Cooperation on Global Challenges

The President and Prime Minister recognized the past cooperative efforts of the two countries in tackling complex global challenges, and pledged to build on these successes to further expand bilateral global cooperation.

The Prime Minister announced his intention to commit 200 million U.S. dollars for the Global Health Fund. The President, who has already pledged 200 million U.S. dollars to help establish the fund, welcomed the Prime Minister's announcement with gratitude.

The President and Prime Minister expressed their shared understanding of the seriousness of the challenge posed by climate change. The Prime Minister pointed to the importance of the Kyoto Protocol in this regard. The President and Prime Minister recognized that climate change is a pressing global problem requiring a global approach. Bearing in mind Japan's leadership at Kyoto, the President welcomed the Prime Minister's offer to initiate promptly high-level U.S.-Japan government-to-government consultations to explore common ground and areas for common action on climate change.

Partners in an Enduring Alliance

The meeting at Camp David provided an opportunity for the President and Prime Minister to get to know each other on a personal basis so that they can work together as leaders of an enduring alliance and as close friends. Noting that the strength of the alliance rests on the robust support of the American and Japanese people, the two leaders welcomed expanded exchanges among the citizens of both nations. The President and Prime Minister

decided that at their meeting in Tokyo in the fall they will review progress on strategic dialogue and the Economic Partnership for Growth, and that they will work to expand bilateral cooperation on global challenges.

NOTE: The annex, entitled "U.S.-Japan Economic Partnership for Growth," was also made available by the Office of the Press Secretary. An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

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